Contents

About the CTC Sentinel

The Combating Terrorism Center is an independent educational and research institution based in the Department of Social Sciences at the United States Military Academy, West Point. The CTC Sentinel harnesses the Center's global network of scholars and practitioners to understand and confront contemporary threats posed by terrorism and other forms of political violence.

Insights from Bin Ladin's Audiocassette Library in Kandahar

By Flagg Miller

AS THE WORLD waits for the declassification of documents from Usama bin Ladin's Abbottabad residence in Pakistan, an earlier archive shedding valuable light on al-Qa`ida's formation under Bin Ladin is slowly being released. Acquired by the Cable News Network in early 2002 from Bin Ladin's Kandahar compound, more than 1,500 audiocassettes are being made available to public researchers by Yale University.[1] Dating from the late 1960s through 2000, the vast majority of tapes in this collection are in Arabic and feature lectures, sermons and conversations among more than 200 speakers from across the Islamic world. At least 22 recordings feature Bin Ladin himself, only one of which has been published to date.[2]

After the tapes were reviewed by U.S. intelligence agencies shortly after their acquisition, the collection was sold to the Williams College Afghan Media Project run by American anthropologist David Edwards. This author began cataloguing and archiving the collection in 2003, as soon as the tapes arrived at the college, and is currently writing a book about the figuration of Bin Ladin's leadership and al-Qa`ida through the archive. The initial results of the findings are presented in this article.

er in this article is the author's estimate to date. As Yale University archivists repair damaged tapes that could not be listened to and conduct a more exhaustive survey, these numbers will change. The author should also note that only a few of the tapes are duplicates, and handwriting on cassette cartridges suggest provenance from diverse users. In its prime, the archive was most likely a continuously changing and collaboratively assembled audio-library for those who gathered in Bin Ladin's house.

1 To access the recordings, visit http://digitalcollections.library.yale.edu/islamic-fund/index.dl.
2 The number of audiocassettes mentioned for each speak-

Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE **OCT 2011**	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED **00-00-2011 to 00-00-2011**

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE **CTC Sentinel. Volume 4, Number 10. October 2011**	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **U.S. Military Academy,Combating Terrorism Center,607 Cullum Road, Lincoln Hall,West Point,NY,10996**	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT **Approved for public release; distribution unlimited**

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

15. SUBJECT TERMS

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**	**Same as Report (SAR)**	**28**	

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std Z39-18

For understanding al-Qa`ida's emergence as an organization and its intellectual leverage in a more embryonic era of pre-9/11 militant jockeying, the Kandahar audiocassette collection may prove incomparable.

Operations and Propaganda in Context

To date, analysts trying to assess Bin Ladin's intellectual formation have had to rely on his own public statements, documents of his views or the views of others garnered from scattered locations across the world as well as the internet, and reports about him by those who knew him or others who have spoken with his associates. The value of his Kandahar tape collection derives from its origination inside his personal compound, a building located just across from the Taliban's Foreign Ministry building. Although he and his family spent most of their time at the Tarnak airport complex outside Kandahar, his city residence and guesthouse was the most important site for retiring and regrouping after meetings with top Taliban officials next door. Other guesthouses in the city were reserved for the rank-and-file. The well-known "Arabic House," for example, accommodated recruits from an increasingly diverse range of backgrounds, some of them English-speaking, as they prepared themselves for courses in weapons training and special operations in camps outside the city. The Foreign Ministry compound was of a higher intellectual order.

In the 2007 volume *Cracks in the Foundation: Leadership Schisms in Al-Qa`ida from 1989-2006*, Vahid Brown of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point argued that al-Qa`ida was long marked by two "factions." One faction consisted of operational specialists such as Abu al-Walid al-Masri and Abu Mus`ab al-Suri, while the other of propagandists such as Bin Ladin and Ayman al-Zawahiri. The latter, argued Brown, have presented a more dangerous front given their ability to brand al-Qa`ida as a movement seeking global unity among disparate movements engaged in violent Islamic resistance. Cassettes in the collection offer much material for unpacking the relation between these factions and their changes over time.

With regard to the militant faction, the collection contains at least eight tapes by Abu Mus`ab al-Suri and six by Abu al-Walid al-Masri, most of them lectures on guerrilla warfare and the history of modern Muslim militancy. Other militants include (in addition to Bin Ladin himself), `Abdallah `Azzam (at least 72 tapes found to date), `Abd al-Salam Faraj (three tapes), Abu al-Harith al-Urduni (two tapes), Sayf al-`Adl (one tape), Abu Hafs al-Libi (one tape), Abu Hafs al-Mauritani (one tape), 9/11 hijacker Hamza al-Ghamdi (one tape)

> ## "The Kandahar audiocassette collection is central to understanding al-Qa`ida's emergence as an organization before the 9/11 attacks."

as well as several dozen unidentified speakers. On these tapes, strategies and tactics for striking U.S. interests in the Islamic world are formulated explicitly, with special attention to lessons from earlier modern Muslim experiences.

In general, the tapes argue that targeting American and Jewish interests can help win public support by identifying a common enemy, using examples from previous anti-colonial struggles in Algeria and Egypt. Syria is mentioned as a valuable lesson for how to cast the interests of ruling elites as "Westernized." The tapes also suggest that those seeking to expel U.S. soldiers from their homelands need not only review lessons on trenched warfare and pitched combat against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, but—in a romantic vein appealing to transnational recruits—they also need to envision themselves as nomadic warriors under the World War I Saudi Shaykh `Abd al-`Aziz ibn Rashid, who might defy state attempts to humiliate them through settlement and subjection. "Mobility," concluded Abu al-Walid al-Masri on tape #1189, "has long played a key role in Islamic conquests."

The bulk of this material was recorded in training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan, notable among them the al-Faruq camp in Khost and in camps

around Kandahar. Dozens of other lectures on militancy, recorded in camps and guesthouses of diverse persuasions, suggest origins in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, the Palestinian Territories, Sudan, Somalia, India and Chechnya.

The preponderance of the collection features the intellectual heavyweights of Arab Salafist and jihadist movements before 9/11. Offering invaluable insight into the "propagandist" faction of al-Qa`ida, the legacy of such recordings is made complex by the fact that many speakers not only had little or no connection with al-Qa`ida itself, but were in some cases, especially by the late 1990s, outspoken critics of the group and specifically Bin Ladin. From this perspective, the collection formerly housed under Bin Ladin's roof would have served much as an audio "library" that offered users a diverse range of viewpoints, not all of them coordinated or synonymous with Bin Ladin's own ideological leadership.

Strains of Religious Inspiration

The intellectual heavyweights in the collection are largely Saudi jurisprudents and religious scholars, many of them from similar educational backgrounds. The top 10 include, in order of frequency, `A'id al-Qarni (80 tapes), Muhammad Bin `Uthaimin (67 tapes), Salman al-`Awda (54 tapes), Muhammad al-Munajjid (27 tapes), Sa`d al-Barik (27 tapes), Safar al-Hawali (25 tapes), Nasir al-`Umar (24 tapes), `Abd al-Rahman al-Dawsari (21 tapes), Sa`id Bin Musaffar al-Qahtani (21 tapes), and `Abdalla al-Hamad (18 tapes). Roughly half of the Saudi legal specialists identified (and 30% of all speakers presently identified) were trained or taught in Riyadh at some point in their lives. As a bastion for the Saudi state's most prestigious scholars and establishment authorities, many of these figures held scant regard for Bin Ladin's stripe of jihadism, especially after 1990 when Saudi Chief Jurisprudent `Abd al-`Aziz ibn Baz (nine tapes) defended King Fahd's decision to host U.S.-led coalition forces in the country in efforts to drive Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.

In dialogue as well as in sometimes heated opposition to such figures are prominently featured representatives of the Saudi "awakening" (*sahwa*) movement that emerged during the 1970s and

grew to a crescendo in the early 1990s. They rallied around scholars such as Muhammad Qutb (12 tapes), Safar al-Hawali, `Abd al-Rahman al-Dawsari, Salman al-`Awda, `A'id al-Qarni and Nasir al-`Umar. *Sahwa* supporters' challenges to the Saudi religious establishment are well documented in the cassette collection. Their initiatives drew momentum from prominent Saudi reformers at the Islamic University of Medina (representing approximately 15% of identified speakers) even as they

"The highest number of cassettes represented by any speaker are those of a Syrian theologian and legal scholar who, until now, has received no attention by researchers or journalists who have sought to document al-Qa`ida's ideological tendencies."

broke with the scholastic orientations of leading instructors there such as Abu Bakr al-Jaza'iri (16 tapes) and Muhammad Nasr al-Din al-Albani (16 tapes). In sum, the large proportion of tapes by leading Saudi scholars and intellectuals offers unprecedented insight into the ways Bin Ladin and Arab Afghan militants at the time drew selectively from establishment thought and sought to position their own radicalism in relation to more widely accepted perspectives.

While the contributions of Saudi scholars are substantial, a fuller assessment of the collection's intellectual legacy requires moving beyond the kingdom itself. Of the top seven speakers most prominently featured, the majority were born outside of Saudi Arabia, in Syria, Kuwait, Palestine and Yemen. All these individuals passed through Saudi Arabia for training or teaching, although none enjoyed long-term employment at the country's most prestigious universities. Indeed, they either left to return home, incorporating what they had learned into more familiar cultural and political

contexts, or, often exiled from their home countries, they used their experiences to strike out for other countries that welcomed their transnational perspectives. Palestinian `Abdallah `Azzam, featured on no fewer than 72 cassettes, taught jurisprudence for five or six years at Jeddah's King `Abd al-`Aziz University before becoming disillusioned and moving to Pakistan in 1979-1980. His life and contributions to the formation of al-Qa`ida have been well documented; much remains in the cassette collection for those interested in studying the complex legacies of `Azzam's work.

Kuwaiti preacher and scholar Ahmad al-Qattan, featured on at least 76 cassettes, is well known in Saudi Arabia, although his oratory also reflects the influences of Sudanese and Egyptian clerics. As with `Azzam, the plight of Palestinians features centrally in many of al-Qattan's works, and his live sermons across the world regularly fill football stadiums. Yemeni jurisprudent, intellectual and parliamentarian `Abd al-Majid al-Zindani is the sixth figure most prominently represented in the collection. During the 1970s and 1980s, his cassettes and broadcasts decrying communism filled the airwaves across the Arabian Peninsula. Upon abandoning the Muslim Brotherhood to build allies among conservative Salafists in Saudi Arabia, he crafted a broader vision for struggling against communists and other apostates worldwide. Aside from these top featured speakers, other well-known militant theoreticians in the collection include `Umar `Abd al-Rahman (eight tapes) and `Umar bin `Umar "Abu Qatadah" (six tapes).

The highest number of cassettes represented by any speaker are those of a Syrian theologian and legal scholar who, until now, has received no attention by researchers or journalists who have sought to document al-Qa`ida's ideological tendencies. Shaykh `Abd al-Rahim al-Tahhan's broad intellectualism and exercised caution in regards to public statements about current affairs may be part of the reason he has been ignored. A more significant reason is that he has not been explicitly mentioned by Bin Ladin in any of his known statements. Trained in the Hanafi legal tradition shared by most Afghans and Pakistanis, al-Tahhan's penchant

for lectures and diverse publications on matters of ritual observance, theology, and ethics gives him currency among Muslims from across the Middle East to Southeast Asia. Such sermons as "Expel the Idolaters from the Arabs' Peninsula" may have called him to the attention of Bin Ladin, prompting the latter to correspond with him during the mid 1990s when drafting letters to the Saudi monarchy.[3]

The presence of more than 100 cassettes of al-Tahhan in the collection suggests that Bin Ladin was a disciple of the cleric's many finer points. Known among Muslim Brothers and Saudi-influenced Salafists from the 1970s through early 1990s as a "quietist," his knack at challenging establishment thought earned him a colorful array of critical designations, including charges that he was a "Sufi," a "Shi'ite," a "Wahhabi," and a *takfiri* guilty of "excessiveness" (*ghuluww*). The terms of such controversy are likely to fall beneath the radar of non-specialists; much of the debate, for example, hinges on the concept of true "insight" (*ru'ya*) and its relation to human faculties of vision. Still, al-Tahhan's interest to Bin Ladin and many Arab Afghans during and after the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan suggests just how much the cassette collection offers to refining the understanding of al-Qa`ida's intellectual moorings. Even while calling attention to common theological grounds among all Muslims (human vision, for example, proves to be exceptionally reliable for understanding God's will), only a vanguard of ascetic and righteous scholar-warriors can save Islam from its enemies. As this author has argued elsewhere, the primary enemy, underscored in the majority of other tapes in the collection, is the corrupt Muslim apostate, rather than the Jew, Christian or American.[4]

Bin Ladin's own cassettes confirm his fairly undisciplined intellectualism. On cassettes from the late 1980s especially,

---

3 To view this letter, see document AFGP-2002-800073, available at the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point.

4 Flagg Miller, "Listen, Plan and Carry Out 'al-Qa`ida'": Theological Dissension in Usama Bin Ladin's Former Audiocassette Collection," in Jeevan Deol and Zaheer Kazmi eds., *Contextualising Jihadi Thought* (New York: Hurst and Company/Columbia University Press, 2012), pp. 69-97.

he makes no pretension to credentials as a scholar, instead posing more as a war reporter from the front lines as well as a jihadist recruiter. His persona in this respect would be polished in future years as he conducted interviews with al-Jazira while sitting in front of bookshelves lined with leather-bound volumes. Tapes from 1996 onward, including his famous "Declaration of War against the Americans," confirm his leadership in representing al-Qa`ida's anti-American message to world audiences. A host of earlier tapes, however, underscore Bin Ladin's deep loathing for the Saudi monarchy. Rallying followers to join his fight against materialism and the worshipping of "man-made law" inside the Saudi kingdom, Bin Ladin exhibits strains of Arab ethnic pride and even nationalism that continued to inflect his discourse well up to the 9/11 attacks.

Soundscapes Leading Home
The polyphony of voices in the collection presents the single most challenging aspect of the archive for current understandings of al-Qa`ida's legacy. If the collection is useful for corroborating what is already known, its greater value lies in unraveling grander narratives with the less glamorous instruments of content analysis and historical contextualization. The challenges of such work are perhaps represented best in extemporaneously recorded material that features in approximately five percent of the collection. These "soundscapes" include conversations in the cramped quarters of moving taxi cabs, classroom lectures and student-teacher interchange at Arab Afghan training camps, interviews with well-known Muslim leaders and intellectuals, recorded telephone conversations, recorded radio broadcasts, collective anthem singing, creative radio-dramas about ordinary Muslims involved in combat, weddings, celebrations before and after combat missions, guest-house poetry competitions and trivia games. These tapes provide invaluable records of the ways people gathering in Kandahar and beyond sought to situate global jihad in relation to everyday life.

Trained as a linguistic anthropologist, this author has devoted much research to date to unpacking the ways in which general jihadist discourses, expressed in discussions about Islamic law, theology,

language, ethics and even "al-Qa`ida" itself, are contextualized and given meaning in such everyday settings. While militants, for example, outline the goals and ethics of the operational "base" (*al-qa`ida* in Arabic) through recourse to scholarly vocabularies in which "the base" is a reference point for Muslim reasoning and discourse, scholars supporting militancy make the opposite move, as noted poignantly in Western analysts' accounts of `Abdallah `Azzam's concept of "the rigid base" (*al-qa`ida al-sulba*).[5] Important clues to audience uptake, qualification or rejection of such rhetoric abound on these more amateur recordings.

Notable in their absence are Ayman al-Zawahiri, Abu Hafs al-Masri and Abu `Ubayda al-Banjshiri, at least in the recordings this author has been able to review to date. While scholars interested in their legacies may be disappointed, "missing clues" in the collection can prove valuable reminders or correctives to common assumptions about al-Qa`ida and its historical influence in various

> **"While indisputably a key militant theoretician for al-Qa`ida's ranks from the 1980s onward, al-Zawahiri's ideas were spread far more through the pen, print medium and later the internet than through the tongue."**

locations. In the case of al-Zawahiri, his absence confirms what is apparent on the internet: his audio-recorded messages begin surfacing only after 9/11. While indisputably a key militant theoretician for al-Qa`ida's ranks from the 1980s onward, al-Zawahiri's ideas were spread far more through the pen, print medium and later the internet than through the tongue. Even during al-Qa`ida's organizational momentum in the late 1990s, in fact, he appears to have been an infrequent visitor to al-

Qa`ida's training camps in Afghanistan, preferring scholarly isolation instead with associates in Egyptian Islamic Jihad guesthouses. The absence of his voice throws into relief the ways his own ideological and social orientation differed from those of Bin Ladin. The tenor of al-Zawahiri's pronounced anti-Americanism, so prominent in the accounts of analysts who focus on al-Qa`ida's official statements to global audiences and especially those distributed on the internet, appears to have been more muted on the ground. If Bin Ladin aspired to lead the campaign to attack the United States, a goal that was especially clear from 1996 onward, the audiocassette medium appears to have been particularly kind to his self-image as al-Qa`ida's "top gun."

Conclusion
Documents from the Abbottabad compound may offer analysts the most reliable glimpses into Bin Ladin's later years as al-Qa`ida's chief and the extent of his influence on al-Qa`ida's affiliates. Yet the Kandahar audiocassette collection is central to understanding al-Qa`ida's emergence as an organization before the 9/11 attacks. For Western security and intelligence analysts especially, the archive seems valuable for what may in the end matter most: insights into the ways that the message of armed jihad against Westerners and Americans gained ideological credibility among Muslims whose primary goal had been achieving radical change within the Islamic world itself.

Dr. Flagg Miller is an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of California at Davis. Trained as a linguistic and cultural anthropologist, his research focuses on modern Muslim reform and militancy in the Middle East and especially Yemen. His first book was entitled The Moral Resonance of Arab Media: Audiocassette Poetry and Culture in Yemen *(Harvard University's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 2007).*

---

5 Flagg Miller, "Al-Qa`ida as a 'Pragmatic Base': Contributions of Area Studies to Sociolinguistics," *Language and Communication* 28:4 (2008): pp. 386-408.

India's Approach to Counterinsurgency and the Naxalite Problem

By Sameer Lalwani

SINCE ITS INDEPENDENCE in 1947, India has fought dozens of campaigns against four distinct and independent insurgencies on its soil—in Punjab, Kashmir, the Northeast, and the Maoist insurgents of central India—as well as one foreign campaign in Sri Lanka. While India has accumulated a wealth of counterinsurgency (COIN) experience that has varied in terms of terrain, insurgent goals, force structure(s), foreign involvement, and outcomes, most COIN scholars have focused on Western foreign incumbent experiences to the neglect of India and other indigenous incumbents.[1] Nevertheless, as both Iraq and Afghanistan move toward assuming greater responsibility for their internal security amidst continued insurgent activity, India's COIN strategies can offer important lessons for these states and others that resemble its highly federalized political system, developing economy, and still evolving democracy.

One analyst has argued that India has "one of the world's most successful records in fighting insurgencies," noting that "it has not yet lost a counterinsurgency campaign within the country."[2] This claim, however, is puzzling given the current struggles of the Indian government to curb a raging Maoist insurgency. Today, while the insurgencies of the Northeast and Kashmir are largely contained, if not under control, and the Punjab insurgency soundly defeated, India has been earnestly testing different COIN strategies to combat a growing Maoist threat throughout its center and east known generally as the Naxalite insurgency. Since resurging in the last decade, the Naxalite uprising has been described by Indian Prime Minister

Manmohan Singh as "a great national security threat" and the "biggest internal security challenge ever faced by our country."[3] This article will briefly describe some of the lessons of success and failure that can be drawn from India's decades of COIN experience and their application in the current fight against the Naxalite insurgency.

India's Alternative Approach to COIN

Generally speaking, the Indian take on COIN appears to depart from the approach advocated by Western doctrine that promotes a population-centric strategy to win "hearts and minds."[4] Despite Indian official doctrine formally espousing this concept[5] and some contentions that India has always seen COIN as a "political rather than military problem,"[6] a closer look reveals that the Indian approach may be better characterized as a strategy of attrition[7] with the deployment of "raw state coercion"[8] and "enemy-centric" campaigns[9] to suffocate an insurgency through a "saturation of forces."[10] At

times it may involve the co-optation of elites to "buy-out" and contain an insurgency.[11] When the military has been deployed, it operates under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), which includes "the power of the security forces to make preventative arrests, search premises without warrant, and shoot and kill civilians."[12]

In each major counterinsurgency campaign, the Indian state developed a number of innovative tactics and organizational capacities that yielded some success along with some negative fallout. During the Punjab campaign, India militarized the police and reversed their role with the military to harness local knowledge and legitimacy and lead kinetic operations.[13] As a result, the police structure remained highly militarized, bloated, inefficient, and incapable of investigative police work more than a decade later.[14] In Kashmir, the creation of a dedicated COIN force—the Rashtriya Rifles, integrating an army ethos into a paramilitary force especially equipped and trained to conduct counterinsurgency—achieved some success, but it ultimately had to be fully manned by army personnel and faced a number of operational and coordination problems with other forces.[15]

1 Indigenous incumbent is meant to distinguish states fighting insurgency on their own soil from foreign incumbents. One notable exception is a recent volume edited by Sumit Ganguly and David Fidler, *India and Counterinsurgency: Lessons Learned* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

2 Rajesh Rajagopalan, "Force and Compromise: India's Counterinsurgency Grand Strategy," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 30:1 (2007).

3 Manmohan Singh, "PM's Speech at the Chief Minister's Meet on Naxalism," April 13, 2006; Manmohan Singh, "PM's Valedictory Address at the Seminar on the Occasion of Golden Jubilee of National Defence College," October 22, 2010.

4 For instance, see David J. Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); John Nagl, David Petraeus, James Amos, *U.S. Army Field Manual No. 3-24* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Stephen Biddle, "The New U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual as Political Science and Political Praxis," *Perspectives on Politics* 6:2 (2008).

5 Lawrence Cline, "The Insurgency Environment in Northeast India," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 17:2 (2006).

6 Rajagopalan, "Force and Compromise: India's Counterinsurgency Grand Strategy."

7 Prem Mahadevan, "The Gill Doctrine: A Model for 21st Century Counterterrorism?" *Faultlines* 19 (2008); K.P.S. Gill, "Endgame in Punjab: 1988-1993," *Faultlines* 1 (1999); Namrata Goswami, "India's Counter-insurgency Experience: The 'Trust and Nurture' Strategy," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 20:1 (2009).

8 Paul Staniland, "Counterinsurgency is a Bloody, Costly Business," *Foreign Policy*, November 24, 2009.

9 Deepak Aneel Boyini, "Explaining Success and Failure: Counterinsurgency in Malaya and India," unpublished masters thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, December 2010.

10 Anit Mukherjee, "India's Experiences with Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," in Sumit Ganguly ed., *Handbook of Asian Security Studies* (London: Routledge, 2010).

11 Anit Mukherjee, "Lessons from Another Insurgency," *New York Times*, May 4, 2006.

12 Sanjib Baruah, *Postfrontier Blues: Toward a New Policy Framework for Northeast India* (Washington, D.C.: East-West Center, 2007).

13 Mahadevan, "The Gill Doctrine: A Model for 21st Century Counterterrorism?"; C. Christine Fair, "Lessons from India's Experience in the Punjab, 1978-93," in Sumit Ganguly and David P. Fidler eds., *India and Counterinsurgency: Lessons Learned* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

14 On subsequent police failures, see Arvind Verma and Srinagesh Gavirneni, "Measuring Police Efficiency in India: An Application of Data Envelopment Analysis," *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management* 29:1 (2006); H.S. Sidhu and S.S. Bains, "Public Expenditure on Police Services in India: With Special Reference to Punjab," *The Indian Police Journal* 55:1 (2008); Pramod Kumar, *Community Policing Programme in Punjab: A Guide* (Chandigarh, India: Institute for Development and Communication, 2011).

15 Rajesh Rajagopalan, "Innovations in Counterinsurgency: The Indian Army's Rashtriya Rifles," *Contemporary South Asia* 31:1 (2004); Moeed Yusuf and Anit Mukherjee, "Counterinsurgency in Pakistan: Learning from India," AEI National Security Outlook, September 2007.

The co-optation and transformation of insurgents into local assets was a tactic employed both in Punjab (called "CATs," for Covert Apprehension Technique) and Kashmir (*ikhwanis*).[16] Turning insurgents was sometimes achieved through money[17] as well as abduction and torture,[18] but these tactics eventually led to new problems, such as increased criminal activity and corrupted security forces, for the respective governments.[19] Moreover, the highly kinetic approach of both campaigns entailed tremendous brutality, torture, disappearances, "encounter killings," and mass graves that created a litany of human rights investigations and public disaffection, and today continues to fuel simmering resentment and potentially violence.[20]

A slight variant of this approach—the buyout and political incorporation of insurgents—has enabled India to keep a lid on a whole host of insurgent separatist movements in the seven states of India's eastern extremity, India's Northeast, since 1956.[21] Yet while eliminating the prospect of separatism, it has perversely created spirals of insecurity, splinter groups (there are more than 100 distinct armed groups in the Northeast), and a dysfunctional insurgent political economy of violence, development aid, and interminable militia politics.[22]

Overall, the Indian strategy of coercion, co-optation, and containment has achieved moderate success in mitigating the threat to the state, and this is being applied today against the re-emergent Naxalite insurgency.

The Naxalite Insurgency

The Naxalites first emerged in 1967 in the village of Naxalbari in West Bengal and spread throughout the central states of Bihar, Orissa, and Andhra Pradesh until it was violently suppressed by state and paramilitary forces by 1972. This militant left-wing movement fractured into more than 40 distinct groups, which began to remobilize, consolidate and become more active in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly in

> **"Overall, the Indian strategy of coercion, co-optation, and containment has achieved moderate success in mitigating the threat to the state, and this is being applied today against the re-emergent Naxalite insurgency."**

the state of Andhra Pradesh.[23] Since 2004, with the merger of the two largest factions—the Peoples War Group and the Maoist Communist Center—to form the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-M), violence has climbed dramatically, with 2,200 incidents and 1,200 killed in 2010 alone.[24]

It is estimated that Naxals have a presence in one-third of districts in India,[25] but with the strongest foothold

in parts of seven states—West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra. The difference today is that this region also happens to sit atop tremendous iron ore, coal, and aluminum deposits as well as irrigation and hydroelectric potential.[26]

While some parts of the left-wing movement in India are willing to partly or fully embrace parliamentary politics to address issues of class, inequality, and distribution, the hardcore Naxalites remain unwilling to countenance democratic politics and seek the violent overthrow of the state through a variety of tactics.[27] Although conventional accounts describe them as motivated by the broad economic deprivation and absence of the state in much of rural central India,[28] a more specific reason is resentment at the local exploitative power configurations—whether feudal landlords, land-expropriating state governments, or

16 Fair; Mukherjee, "Lessons from Another Insurgency."

17 Ibid.; Prem Mahadevan, "Counter Terrorism in the Indian Punjab: Assessing the 'Cat' System," *Faultlines* 18 (2007).

18 Joyce Pettigrew, "Parents and Their Children in Situations of Terror: Disappearances and Special Police Activity in Punjab," in Jeffrey A. Sluka ed., *Death Squad: The Anthropology of State Terror* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

19 Sidhu and Bains; Mukherjee, "Lessons from Another Insurgency."

20 On Punjab human rights violations, see Romesh Silva, Jasmine Marwaha, and Jeff Kligner, "Violent Deaths and Enforced Disappearances During Counterinsurgency in Punjab, India: A Preliminary Quantitative Analysis," A Joint Report by Benetech's Human Rights Data Analysis Group & Ensaaf, Inc., January 2009. On Kashmir mass graves, see Lydia Polgreen, "Mass Graves Hold Thousands, Kashmir Inquiry Finds," *New York Times*, August 22, 2011.

21 Cline.

22 Baruah.

23 P.V. Ramana, "India's Maoist Insurgency: Evolution, Current Trends, and Responses," in Michael Kugelman ed., *India's Contemporary Security Challenges* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2011); Jennifer L. Oetken, "Counterinsurgency Against Naxalites in India," in Sumit Ganguly and David P. Fidler eds., *India and Counterinsurgency: Lessons Learned* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

24 These figures are from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Reports, Government of India.

25 Rahul Bedi estimates that Naxals have a presence in 20 of India's 29 states, or 223 of 603 administrative districts, roughly one-third of the country. See Rahul Bedi,

"State Told to Disband Militia Fighting Maoist Guerillas," *New Zealand Herald*, July 13, 2011.

26 J.K. Achuthan, "Tackling Maoists: The Andhra Paradigm," *Indian Defence Review* 25:2 (2010).

27 Naxalite insurgents have targeted "class enemies" (sometimes through beheadings), police and security forces, infrastructure such as police stations, schools, local government buildings, roads, power lines, railways, and economic targets like mining and energy infrastructure. They have been able to carry out these activities through the acquisition as well as indigenous production of a wide variety of weapons including automatic firearms, rocket launchers, and a whole host of mines for which they use to conduct IED attacks and small unit ambushes. See Ramana; Achuthan; Sudeep Chakravarti, "No End in Sight," *Seminar* 605 (2010). The Naxalites are also reported to provide public goods to local residents such as security, swift justice in "people's courts," education, irrigation, community kitchens, medical units, and minimum wage enforcement in part through extortion and taxation of local government offices, contractors, businessmen, and industrialists. See Bedi; Oetken; Chakravarti; Pratul Ahuja and Rajat Ganguly, "The Fire Within: Naxalite Insurgency Violence in India," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 18:2 (2007).

28 For example, the Ministry of Home Affairs Annual Report from 2006-07 states, "Naxalites typically operate in a vacuum created by inadequacy of administrative and political institutions, espouse local demands and take advantage of the prevalent disaffection, perceived injustice among the underprivileged and remote segments of population." Also see "India's Naxalites: A Spectre Haunting India," *Economist*, August 17, 2006; Vani K. Borooah, "Deprivation, Violence, and Conflict: An Analysis of Naxalite Activity in the Districts of India," *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 2:2 (2008).

extractive corporations—that continue to dominate and suppress the lower castes and aboriginal tribes that reside in these areas and constitute the Naxalite support base.[29] The Naxalites, however, are a protean movement that has expertly exploited a variety of caste, ethnic, or sectarian cleavages in India.[30]

Unlike some of the ethno-sectarian insurgencies of recent years, the Naxalite insurgency—posturing itself as a "people's war"—comports more with classic COIN theory that was built on notions of competitive state building to address economic and governance deficiencies.[31] In step with their historical experience, however, the Indian state has generally favored a more kinetic approach to counterinsurgency over winning "hearts and minds."[32]

There appears to be an explicit awareness that the Western COIN model may not be the right fit for India. One Indian military analyst and practitioner praised the Andhra Pradesh approach for its "enemy-centric" character, an anathema in current Western COIN discourse.[33] Another well-regarded Indian analyst defended a kinetic focus and derided the hearts and minds "myth" by recalling that even Sir Gerald Templar regarded it as "that nauseating phrase I think I invented."[34] Moreover, a well-known defense journalist wrote that a population-centric approach "has proved to be flawed."[35]

Indian State Response to the Naxalites
State Strategies
Given India's federalist structure, the onus for responding to the rising Naxalite threat has fallen upon individual states, although with substantial federal support during the past five years.[36] The hardest hit states of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh—where roughly half of Naxalite activity is concentrated and continues to escalate—have raced to scale up the manpower of their state and local police forces, while being supplemented with about 40 battalions of central paramilitary forces.[37] Meanwhile, states such as Bihar and West Bengal have also seen a rise in violence in recent years as their police manpower has declined or held steady. The composition of police is another variable that may adversely affect outcomes. The police forces of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Orissa are composed of a much higher percentage of paramilitary forces (as opposed to civil police) relative to the Indian average, potentially rendering them less locally knowledgeable or legitimate.[38]

Central and state governments have been criticized for their paramilitary forces' shortfalls in size, antiquated organizational structure and age profile, inadequate training (for instance, only firing 20 rounds per year), and most importantly the absence of coordination or a coherent strategy.[39]

The Limits of Indian Responses
True to its past history, the Indian central and state governments' COIN responses have been heavily kinetic, disregarding local public perceptions. One Indian commentator wrote, "exceeding Maoist rebels they accuse of brutality, the police, paramilitary and Salwa Judum recruits continue to freely kill unarmed

men and women. It has wrecked any short- to medium-term hope of winning tribals and forest dwellers back to the fold of the state."[40] With the launch of additional major sweep operations and expansion of commando units, collateral damage of civilians caught in the crossfire and through retribution is expected to rise.[41] Violence, whether premeditated or spontaneous, "can be completely indiscriminate, leading to the burning of the homes of innocents and their torture, maiming, rape, and death."[42]

While there have been centralized efforts to coordinate the use of force and economic development, these have largely faltered due to poor coordination, misutilization, and co-optation by local elites and corporations.[43] The Indian government has repeatedly set up unified commands to better coordinate the use of central paramilitary forces, state armed (paramilitary) police, and state local or civil police, but these have been riddled with problems and at times hindered local innovation.[44] A major attempt was launched with Operation Green Hunt in late 2009, a massive search-and-destroy operation meant to clear out the Naxalite strongholds in the forests of central India. The fissures of this unified command, however, were exposed when a company of central paramilitary forces short on local police support and intelligence were ambushed and more than 80 killed after being tracked for three days by Naxalite insurgents.[45]

29 Nandani Sundar, "At War With Oneself: Constructing Naxalism as India's Biggest Security Threat," in Michael Kugelman, *India's Contemporary Security Challenges* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2011); Manoj Mate and Adnan Naseemullah, "State Security and Elite Capture: The Implementation of Antiterrorist Legislation in India," *Journal of Human Rights* 9 (2010).

30 Kirpal S. Dhillon, "Police and Terrorism," in P.J. Alexander ed., *Policing India in the New Millennium* (Mumbai, India: Allied Publishers, 2002).

31 Biddle; Stathis N. Kalyvas, "The New U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual as Political Science and Political Praxis," *Perspectives on Politics* 6:2 (2008).

32 Ramana; Bedi.

33 Boyini.

34 Ajai Sahni, "India's Maoists and the Dreamscape of 'Solutions,'" South Asia Terrorism Portal, February 2010.

35 Praveen Swami, "Anti-Maoist War in Serious Trouble," *Hindu*, August 10, 2011.

36 The minister of Home Affairs recently announced that there are currently 71 battalions of Central Paramilitary Forces deployed in the Naxalite-affected region. See "P. Chidambaram Inaugurates DGPs/IGPs Conference," Press Information Bureau, Government of India, September 15, 2011.

37 Chhattisgarh has 28 battalions and Jharkhand has 15. See Vinay Kumar, "In Chhattisgarh, Central Forces Don New Mantle," *Hindu*, April 23, 2011; Amit Gupta, "CRPF's Rain Offensive," *Telegraph*, July 12, 2011.

38 This assessment is based on data from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

39 Sahni, "India's Maoists and the Dreamscape of 'Solutions'"; Achuthan; Bhavna Vij-Aurora, "Armed and Dangerous," *India Today*, April 25, 2011.

40 The local vigilantes in part recruited by the state governments, sometimes as special police officers or village defense committees, are known as the Salwa Judum ("peace hunt") movement. They have brutally abused the population and in fact escalated violence. See Sundar; Chakravarti.

41 Chakravarti.

42 Ibid.

43 Sundar; Ajai Sahni, "India and her Maoists," *Wars Within Borders*, November 2009.

44 Supriya Sharma, "Unified Command Flopped Last Time, Will it Work Now?" *Times of India*, July 17, 2010; Bibhi Prasad Routray, "India's Anti-Maoist Operations: Where Are the Special Forces?" *Eurasia Review*, January 5, 2011.

45 Anuj Chopra, "India's Failing Counterinsurgency Campaign," *Foreign Policy*, May 14, 2010; "A Disaster Foretold," *The Pioneer*, April 11, 2010.

The two states that appear to be relatively successful at reducing insurgent activity or keeping it at bay are Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Maharashtra seems to have had a relatively higher police to population ratio at the beginning of the decade, potentially buffering it from the spillover of Naxalite insurgency from neighboring areas. While Andhra Pradesh's manpower ratio rose somewhat over the past decade, its success in dramatically reducing Naxalite activity in its territory is generally attributed by Indian analysts to a rather different strategy of raising a special commando force known as the Greyhounds.[46]

The Greyhound Force
The Greyhound force, an elite anti-Maoist commando unit, was raised beginning in 1987 from within the Andhra Pradesh police to conduct small unit counterguerrilla offensives against Naxalite insurgents.[47] Roundly believed to have been tremendously successful, the Andhra Pradesh police have drawn inspiration from the infamous Selous Scouts of Rhodesia to prosecute the equivalent of a "bush war" against the Naxalites.[48]

The 2,000-strong Greyhound force is better paid and equipped than federal or state paramilitary forces with state of the art weapons and technology, better trained in jungle warfare, and moves in nimbler, highly capable units to target, track, and destroy insurgent networks by modeling guerrilla tactics.[49] The Greyhounds are also well supported by the entire state police force.[50] Two companies of Greyhounds would be deployed at a joint operational base with two platoons of local home guards

for intelligence and logistical support.[51] Between 2005 and 2008, they have been credited with bringing down the Maoist cadre in Andhra Pradesh from 1,200 to 500 and Naxalite activity in the state this decade has dropped from a peak of roughly 600 attacks in 2003 to around 100 in 2010.[52] Their success was attributed to signals intelligence exploitation, careful operational planning, jungle survival training, night operations, and decapitation of Maoist leadership.[53]

The Greyhound model is perceived to be so successful that many states are starting to develop their own small unit commando police battalions. While the Indian central government continues to pour central paramilitary forces into the region (now on the order of about 70 battalions), it is also raising 10 Commando Battalions for Resolute Action (CoBRA) and deploying them alongside state and federal units.[54] Yet one should be leery of the triumphant claims made of Andhra Pradesh as well as the potential to model the Greyhound success.

First, there is reason to believe that the Greyhounds did not defeat the Maoist insurgents outright but merely displaced them to neighboring states. This corresponds with data that shows Naxalite activity skyrocketed in neighboring Chhattisgarh as it declined in Andhra Pradesh.[55] Second, intelligence officers and other analysts believe gains in Andhra Pradesh are unsustainable and the state remains highly vulnerable to Maoist activity.[56] This fear was validated by a recent *Times of India*-IMMRB survey of five northern districts of Andhra Pradesh recently cleared of Maoist insurgents where the majority of those surveyed still sympathized with Naxalite motives, methods, and results, and viewed actions by state forces such as encounter

killings as suspect and unjustified. Meanwhile, a plurality believed nothing had improved and exploitation had increased since their departure.[57] Even if the Naxalite presence and violence has been structurally reduced, the survey revealed that the strategy has certainly not relied upon winning hearts and minds to achieve this end.

Finally, even if the Greyhound approach was actually successful, the background conditions required to achieve operational effectiveness are currently absent or underdeveloped in the rest of the country. Andhra Pradesh began raising the Greyhounds in 1987 but did not achieve marked success until almost two decades later. Despite the state having a relatively efficient policing system, both the Greyhound commandos and the state police and security force serving as the logistical and intelligence "tail" took substantial time to mature.[58] New police inductees served first in the Greyhound support unit for about four years before rotating to the district level where they might continue to support operations.[59] This gradually built up inter-organizational familiarity and cooperation within the state, and the substantial network of well-trained local police—features noticeably absent in the rest of Naxal-affected India—were able to funnel high quality intelligence for Greyhound targeting.[60]

Conclusion
Three points are worth noting about Indian counterinsurgency strategy. First, rather than abiding by a singular formula, strategies have varied over time and space depending on the context and nature of the insurgency. Second, India has routinely departed from the traditional "hearts and minds" or population-centric COIN for a highly kinetic and coercive enemy-

46 The different approaches to counterinsurgency employed by the U.S. Army (modeled on *FM 3-24*) and U.S. special forces are analyzed by Jon Lindsay in "Commandos, Advisors, and Diplomats: Special Operations Forces and Counterinsurgency," presented to the International Studies Association Annual Conference, New York, February 15, 2009.

47 Boyini; Madhavi Tata, "Lessons from Andhra," *Outlook India*, April 19, 2010; Ajai Sahni, "Andhra Pradesh: The State Advances, the Maoists Retreat," *South Asia Intelligence Review* 6:10 (2007).

48 Achuthan.

49 Boyini.

50 Sahni, "Andhra Pradesh: The State Advances, the Maoists Retreat."

51 Ibid.; Achuthan.

52 This data is from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. Also see Sreenivas Janyala, "The Andhra Fightback," *Indian Express*, June 27, 2009.

53 Ibid.; Achuthan; Tata.

54 Routray.

55 This data is from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. Also see Vij-Aurora.

56 Chakravarti; KP Narayana Kumar, "Naxalites 'Tamed' in Andhra Pradesh, Hub of Movement," *MINT*, July 2, 2009.

57 "58% in AP Say Naxalism is Good, Finds TOI Poll," *Times of India*, September 28, 2010. Although the survey did not specifically pose questions about the Greyhounds, they are likely included in the forces viewed with suspicion as unjust since they were the lead operational forces in these areas over the last decade.

58 On initial police efficiency, see Verma and Gavirneni. On maturation, see Sahni, "Andhra Pradesh: The State Advances, the Maoists Retreat."

59 Achuthan; Sahni, "Andhra Pradesh: The State Advances, the Maoists Retreat."

60 Ibid.

centric COIN. Third, Indian successes are never "clean" and always involve uncomfortable tradeoffs, whether by way of criminal activity, organizational dysfunction and corruption, or further insurgency. These should all be expected as India faces down the Naxalite insurgency over what might be a full decade or more.[61]

This third point is in part related to India's democratic character. The mobilization capacity of insurgents creates perverse interests by political parties to harness these assets for their own ends.[62] In fact, for much of the earlier part of this decade, most Naxal-affected states "abdicated their authority over vast regions, as long as the semblance of normalcy could be maintained and the electoral interests of the dominant political party could be taken care of."[63]

Moreover, Indian counterinsurgency has been and will likely continue to look both brutal and incomplete (by Western standards) because the incumbent is unwilling to countenance the types of institutional overhauls needed to fully quell insurgent impulses. If the fundamental conflict is not over the distribution of resources that can be mended with economic development, but rather the distribution of power controlled by the state and elite cadres, then the disease is the system.[64] The cure then may deeply threaten not only India's growth engine that has relied upon land appropriation and displacement for industrialization and mining, but also the power, composition, and identity of the Indian state stretching from the local level up to the state and national governments.

Sameer Lalwani is a Ph.D. candidate in political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Fieldwork for this research was partly supported by the Tobin Project.

61 Ramana estimates 7-10 years for government strategy to start seeing results and Vij-Aurora reports that one in-telligence official estimated 8-10 years simply to properly train the required force.

62 Mukherjee, "India's Experiences with Insurgency and Counterinsurgency"; Paul Staniland, "Cities on Fire: Social Mobilization, State Policy, and Urban Insurgen-cy," *Comparative Political Studies* 43 (2010).

63 Achuthan.

64 This borrows a concept used by Anatol Lieven to ex-plain some elements of another South Asian state. See Anatol Lieven, *Pakistan: A Hard Country* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011).

Evaluating Pakistan's Offensives in Swat and FATA

By Daud Khattak

IN THE PAST three years, Pakistani security forces have launched a number of operations against Pakistani Taliban militants in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) as well as in the Swat Valley. Each one of these operations concluded with government pronouncements that the "miscreants" had been routed and the area secured. In almost all of these cases, however, the goals of the operations—primarily the maintenance of peace—remained elusive. Although militants were routed in the initial phase, their staying power afterward remained. While hundreds of thousands of people were displaced from their villages as a result of the military operations, the Pakistani Taliban leadership remains alive and their support mechanisms intact.

To judge the success of these offensives, this article will discuss each major operation. It will explain the security situation before each offensive, and then provide an update as to what the security picture is today. This evaluation is especially critical in the context of U.S. demands on Pakistan to launch an offensive against the Haqqani network in North Waziristan Agency.

North and South Waziristan

Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan forced Pakistani security forces to help capture or kill fugitive al-Qa`ida and Taliban leaders in the tribal areas bordering Afghanistan. It was the first time in Pakistan's history that the state deployed more than 70,000 regular troops in the tribal areas.

One key area was the Waziristan region, which includes both North and South Waziristan, bordering the southeastern provinces of Afghanistan. Two major operations—al-Mizan and Zalzala—were conducted by Pakistani security forces between 2002 and 2008 in Waziristan against Pakistani Taliban commanders Nek Mohammad Wazir, Baitullah Mehsud and foreign fighters.[1] Both of

1 Iqbal Khattak, "Deserted Town Shows Human Cost of Operation Zalzala," *Daily Times*, May 20, 2008.

the operations, however, ended in peace deals—the Shakai Agreement in March 2004 and the Sararogha Agreement in February 2005—which basically conceded more power and influence to militants in the region.[2] The benefit of the peace deals for Pakistan was that the militants agreed not to target the Pakistani state. Their cross-border activities in Afghanistan, however, continued.

In 2009, the United States placed increased pressure on Pakistan to launch an operation in North Waziristan Agency, specifically against the Haqqani network. Instead, the Pakistan Army began an operation in South Waziristan Agency against TTP chief Hakimullah Mehsud, who was responsible for the majority of suicide and other attacks in FATA and Pakistani cities. The operation largely began on October 17, 2009, and was called Rah-e-Nijat.[3] Pakistan's security forces claimed to inflict heavy casualties on South Waziristan's militants, disrupting their command and control system.[4] Yet the top militant leadership, such as Hakimullah Mehsud, Qari Hussain and Wali Muhammad, managed to escape. The operation also displaced thousands of locals, and their homes were bulldozed. The majority of these refugees are still living in Dera Ismail Khan and other cities in internally displaced person (IDP) camps. They are reluctant to move back to their homes because of lack of shelter as well as fear of the Pakistani Taliban. Many civilians believe that the Pakistani Taliban is sheltering in neighboring Orakzai and Kurram agencies, and plan on returning to South Waziristan once the military relaxes its presence.

In North Waziristan, the well-known *maliks* (tribal elders) and their families have already migrated to Bannu District or other neighboring cities, while the lower middle class or poor families are still living in the agency. North Waziristan remains the stronghold

2 Khadim Hussain, "Social Control in FATA," *Dawn*, June 22, 2011.

3 Zahid Hussain and Jeremy Page, "Taleban Militants Put Up Stern Resistance to South Waziristan Offensive," *The Times*, October 19, 2009.

4 Irfan Burki, Daud Khattak and Muhammad Anis, "Forces Close in on Srarogha," *The News International*, October 29, 2009.

of the Haqqani network, along with groups led by commander Hafiz Gul Bahadur and some small groups of Uzbeks and Chinese Uighurs. Pakistan's government and military have refused to conduct a military offensive in North Waziristan to date. It is widely accepted by outside observers that Pakistan views the Haqqani network as an important foreign policy asset, despite the group's targeting of international and Afghan forces in Afghanistan.

The Swat Valley

Swat, a scenic valley in northern Pakistan, is part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, known as the "settled"[5] areas of Pakistan. While the roots of militancy in Swat date back to the mid-1990s when hardline cleric Sufi Muhammad staged an uprising for the implementation of Shari`a in the valley, it was the actions of his son-in-law, Maulana Fazlullah, that brought a Pakistani security offensive.[6]

Using his illegal FM radio station, Maulana Fazlullah won the support of many civilians in Swat and staged a new uprising in 2006-2007. His men captured several villages, police stations, and government infrastructure. They banned women from markets, closed CD shops by force and proscribed music. These actions, combined with attacks on Pakistani security forces in the aftermath of the July 2007 *Lal Masjid* (Red Mosque) incident, forced the Pakistani government to launch a military operation against Maulana Fazlullah.

The first phase of Operation Rah-e-Haq began in November 2007. The army claimed to have killed scores of militants and to have dislodged them from their bases. Nevertheless, attacks on the security forces continued, causing the government to sign a peace agreement with Fazlullah in May 2008.

Tensions emerged again when Fazlullah's men refused to lay down their arms and demanded the withdrawal of army troops from Swat as a pre-condition for

respecting the May 2008 agreement.[7] This forced the Pakistan Army to launch the second phase of Operation Rah-e-Haq in July 2008.

While both operations disrupted the Pakistani Taliban's operations, they failed to fully eliminate Fazlullah's militia. Instead, the Pakistani Taliban emerged more powerful after each of the two operations. Both military assaults paralyzed civilian affairs in the valley and created negative effects on the local economy. The Taliban destroyed infrastructure in Swat, blowing up bridges and burning down school buildings. They also beheaded and shot to death dozens of locals on charges of spying. These actions severely disrupted the local population.[8]

In late 2008 and early 2009, Swat suffered the worst violence yet. In April 2009, militants captured the district headquarters in Mingora and marched into the neighboring district of Buner. This forced the Pakistan Army to launch a decisive operation, Rah-e-Rast, to dislodge the militants, who had moved their forces within 70 miles of the Pakistani capital, Islamabad. The army began the operation by evacuating the local population. Nearly 2.5 million people left the valley and were settled in camps as well as in houses with relatives and friends in other cities.

The army then bombed Taliban positions using heavy artillery, jets and helicopters. After softening their positions, the military moved in with ground forces. The army claimed to have killed hundreds of militants, and they declared victory in July 2009. Operation Rah-e-Rast was the most successful operation to date against militants in the sense that it effectively dislodged them from Swat, ensuring the return of displaced people back to their homes.

It was still not a complete success, however. The Taliban leadership once again escaped, while the local agricultural economy was destroyed by Taliban and army operations. The destruction of bridges and roads made it

almost impossible for traders to harvest produce for several years.

Today, the army still occupies checkpoints in the valley, causing a nuisance to the local population. The Pakistani Taliban continue to launch occasional attacks, keeping the local population in constant fear of a return to the dreaded days of the past. Several key political and social figures have been assassinated. Additionally, the much-promised reconstruction process is far from satisfactory. Only a few dozen of the hundreds of schools and other buildings destroyed by the Taliban have been rebuilt.

Bajaur Agency

Bajaur Agency has been the stronghold of militant leaders such as Faqir Muhammad and Zia-ur-Rahman, both of whom are believed to maintain links with al-Qa`ida. To combat the Pakistani Taliban in Bajaur, Pakistan's security forces launched Operation Sherdil in August 2008. The operation forced thousands of civilians to flee the area and seek refuge in makeshift camps in other cities. The army declared success in February 2009, announcing that more than 1,000 militants had been killed.[9]

Yet militants continue to attack pro-government tribal elders, *jirgas* and *lashkars* despite the presence of army troops in the area. Unlike the situation in Swat, residents displaced from Bajaur have not moved back to their homes. The army has also imposed a ban on growing crops such as wheat and maize—since militants use the fields as cover during ambush operations or the placement of roadside bombs—causing financial losses to the civilian population. The government bulldozed hundreds of homes during the operation, yet it offered little, if any, compensation. This resulted in local resentment toward the government.

Today, security forces are deployed on key roads, while villagers are responsible for defending their local areas. The villagers are left with two options: either fight the Taliban, or cooperate with them. Those who fight the Taliban are often victim to

---

5 In the Pakistani context, "settled areas" are where normal Pakistani laws are applied. The tribal areas, in contrast, are ruled under a different set of laws.

6 Daud Khan Khattak, "Who is the Swat Taliban's Commander?" The AfPak Channel, April 21, 2010.

7 "Militants Pull Out of Talks in Swat," *Dawn*, June 30, 2008.

8 Daud Khattak, "Taliban's Deadly 'Justice' Cows Pakistan," *Sunday Times*, January 18, 2009.

9 For details on this operation, see Sameer Lalwani, "The Pakistan Military's Adaptation to Counterinsurgency in 2009," *CTC Sentinel* 3:1 (2010).

their abuses, and the group has even kidnapped children of pro-government militia members as punishment.

Khyber Agency

Khyber Agency is the key route through which NATO supplies travel to Afghanistan from Pakistani ports. The militant group that operates in the area is Lashkar-i-Islam (LI), led by Mangal Bagh. A series of military offensives under the name Operation Sirat-e-Mustaqeem were conducted against LI in Bara sub-division of Khyber, an area adjoining the Pakistani city of Peshawar, in June 2008. Each operation resulted in long curfews, destruction of businesses, civilian buildings and a number of attacks on security forces and civilians. The militant leadership, however, always escaped unscathed.[10]

In the months after Operation Sirat-e-Mustaqeem, the militants again returned to the Bara area. Pakistan's security forces responded with a series of smaller operations.[11] Since these operations, the Bara area has remained under curfew. The majority of locals opposing the militants have left the area, while many others have migrated to makeshift IDP camps. The militants and their commander, Mangal Bagh, have retreated to the mountainous Tirah Valley of the same agency where they are fighting the Zakhakhel tribe, which opposes the LI presence in the area.

Kurram Agency

Kurram is arguably the most important and strategic of the seven tribal agencies. Recent reports suggest that the Haqqani network has shifted from North Waziristan to Kurram. Besides Taliban activity, Kurram is also known for Shi`a-Sunni rivalries. It is home to the Thall-Parachinar highway that links Kurram to the rest of the country. The Shi`a, who mostly live in Upper Kurram, must travel on the highway to reach the rest of the country, and they have been blocked from doing so for years by the Sunni who predominate in Lower Kurram.

In July 2011, the military launched Operation Koh-e-Sufaid in response to an escalation of Taliban attacks on passenger vehicles along the highway, especially kidnap-for-ransom activities on Shi`a traveling the road. The primary goal of the operation was to open the main highway for travelers.[12] Numerous reports in Pakistani and foreign media, however, suggested that the motive was to help Haqqani network militants establish operations in Kurram to facilitate cross-border operations in Afghanistan. The fact that the operation took place in Central Kurram rather than Lower Kurram, where most Taliban activity is reported, fueled suspicion about Pakistan's motives.[13]

The operation was declared a success on August 18, 2011. Yet the roads are still closed and the Shi`a population still cannot travel around the area without military escort.[14] The Taliban leadership, as well, escaped arrest in the operation.[15] Koh-e-Sufaid displaced thousands of families from their homes, and they are still living in IDP camps. Moreover, the IDP camp in Lower Kurram has barred entrance to journalists as well as aid workers, and media reports have speculated that Pakistan's security agencies are housing anti-U.S., but pro-government, militant leaders in the camp so that they are shielded from U.S. drone strikes.[16]

Mohmand and Orakzai Agencies

In Mohmand and Orakzai agencies, the military has launched a number of small operations. These offensives have displaced families, who have been forced to move to IDP camps. Moreover, despite these operations, the security situation remains volatile. Militant leaders such as Abdul Wali (also known as Omar Khalid) in Mohmand and Noor Jamal (also known as Mullah Toofan) in Orakzai are still alive and present a security threat in those areas.

Conclusion

In the context of the United States pressuring Pakistan to launch a military operation against the Haqqani network in North Waziristan, one must assess Pakistan's previous results in conducting similar operations in other areas of FATA. One of the key concerns of civilians in FATA is how the militant leadership almost always escapes after every Pakistani military offensive. The pattern in all these offensives is success at dislodging militants from their positions temporarily, yet failure to implement any effective counterinsurgency strategy to prevent the Pakistani Taliban from regaining influence once the military operations wind down.

To achieve success, Pakistan's military must focus on the militant leadership in future offensives. Failure to eliminate the militant leadership means that these fighters merely move to an adjoining territory, reorganize and continue their attacks when the offensive is declared a success. Pakistan's government also must work to better address the needs and concerns of the local communities in FATA as well as in Swat. Its poor handling of the "rebuild" phase of these operations has alienated civilians and allowed for the Pakistani Taliban to maintain its influence. It is difficult to imagine that any offensive in North Waziristan will yield better results.

Daud Khattak is Senior Editor with RFE/RL's Mashaal Radio in Prague, Czech Republic. Besides working in Afghanistan as Editor at Pajhwok Afghan News from 2005-2008, Mr. Khattak worked with Pakistani English daily newspapers covering the situation in KP and FATA. He also worked for Sunday Times London *and contributed articles to the* Christian Science Monitor. *In 2010, his paper on the situation in Swat, "The Battle for Pakistan: Swat Valley," was published by the New America Foundation.*

---

10 Daud Khattak, "Khyber Military Operation All Hype, No Substance," *Daily Times*, June 30, 2008.

11 Tauseef-ur-Rahman, "Pashto Names of Bara Operations Create Drama, and Doubts, Too," *The News International*, December 7, 2009.

12 "Operation Launched in Central Kurram," *Dawn*, July 4, 2011.

13 Mohammad Taqi, "The Sham Operation in Kurram," *Daily Times*, July 7, 2011.

14 As of October 31, 2011, however, reports suggested that the Thall-Parachinar had finally been reopened. For details, see "Parachinar Highway," *Dawn*, October 31, 2011.

15 Daud Khattak, "'Clearing' Kurram," The AfPak Channel, August 25, 2011.

16 Taqi.

The Enduring Appeal of Al-`Awlaqi's "Constants on the Path of Jihad"

By J.M. Berger

ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2011, a U.S. missile strike killed Yemeni-American cleric Anwar al-`Awlaqi, who was operating in Yemen for al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Although his death will be a loss for AQAP, al-`Awlaqi's greatest contribution to the jihadist cause, his six-hour audio lecture titled "Constants on the Path of Jihad," will persist in the years ahead. This speech may be the single most influential work of jihadist incitement in the English language. "Constants" has influenced dozens toward violence, including the Fort Dix Six, a number of Somali-Americans recruited into al-Shabab, Alaskans Paul and Nadia Rockwood, New Jersey residents Mohamed Alessa and Carlos Almonte, the Toronto 18 in Canada, and Rajib Karim in the United Kingdom. A Taliban recruitment cell in London, uncovered by officials there in September 2011, was using the audio recording as a recruitment tool.[1]

This article examines Anwar al-`Awlaqi's "Constants on the Path of Jihad," showing how the cleric expanded and revised an Arabic text to widen its appeal in the West and beyond. It also argues that while al-`Awlaqi's death will put an end to his operational planning, his inspirational contributions will continue to radicalize individuals toward violence in the years ahead.

"Constants on the Path of Jihad"
"Constants" is not Anwar al-`Awlaqi's original work. The jihadist tract was written in Arabic after 9/11 by the ideologue Yusuf al-`Uyayri, a veteran of the jihad against the Soviet Union. Al-`Uyayri later founded al-Qa`ida in Saudi Arabia.[2] Al-`Uyayri

was the author of several influential works on jihad that have been widely distributed online. He was killed by Saudi security forces in 2003.[3] Al-`Awlaqi's translation of "Constants" into English has become a classic of radicalization in the West, not just because of al-`Awlaqi's formidable language skills, but also his creative interpretation of the original text with expanded religious stories and real-life examples.

Al-`Awlaqi's "Constants" is believed to have been recorded around 2005, after he left the United States due to suspicion about his role in the 9/11 attacks.[4] In early 2004, he moved to Yemen. Although al-`Awlaqi's lectures had taken on a militant, anti-Western tone during this time, his public work studiously omitted overt incitements to violence, possibly reflecting an evolving ideological stance or simply a desire to avoid prosecution. He had previously discussed jihad in largely historical or theoretical contexts. "Constants" represented a meaningful step forward in al-`Awlaqi's path toward becoming an avowed terrorist.[5] By 2010, he would become publicly affiliated with AQAP.[6]

Al-`Awlaqi took some liberties with the translation of al-`Uyayri's work, altering the text in certain places and expanding it in others. At least two English translations also exist in text form, one transcribing al-Awlaqi's translation but with additional editing, the other more closely following the Arabic original but with some sections clearly influenced by al-`Awlaqi's version. Versions of al-`Awlaqi's commentary have recently been translated into Urdu and Bengali,

among other languages, and posted on extremist forums.[7] These translations testify to the fact that the Yemeni-American cleric did more than simply render al-`Uyayri's original text into English.

The Elements of "Constants"
"Constants on the Path of Jihad" is a discussion of the eternal and unchanging principles that—in the view of Yusuf al-`Uyayri and largely adopted here by Anwar al-`Awlaqi—require Muslims to fight continuously on behalf of their faith until the Day of Judgment. The work is largely a response to what al-`Uyayri saw as an innovation in Islamic thought that allows for situations in which jihad might be temporarily suspended or cease entirely. The introduction of al-`Uyayri's text, as translated by al-`Awlaqi, stated:

> In our miserable time, he says, in this miserable time, we need to go back to the constants, because we find some people among us today are trying to change the constants of jihad into variables.[8]

What follows is a multidimensional but circular argument about why jihad must continue without interruption. The crux of this argument revolves around six "constants" of jihad:

1. Jihad will continue until the Day of Judgment.
2. Jihad does not rely on a specific leader.
3. Jihad is not tied to a specific land.
4. Jihad does not depend on a specific battle.
5. Victory in jihad does not necessarily mean military victory.
6. Defeat in jihad does not necessarily mean military defeat.

All of the constants derive to a greater or lesser extent from the first constant and are self-justifying in reference to it. For instance, the third constant

1 Michelle Shephard, "The Powerful Online Voice of Jihad," *Toronto Star*, October 18, 2009; Duncan Gardham, "Former Taliban Jailed for Recruiting Young Men on Streets of Britain," *Telegraph*, September 9, 2011; Andrea Elliott, "A Call to Jihad, Answered in America," *New York Times*, July 11, 2009; Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, "Anwar al-`Awlaqi's Disciples: Three Case Studies," *CTC Sentinel* 4:7 (2011).

2 Thomas Hegghammer, *Jihad in Saudi Arabia: Violence*

and Pan-Islamism Since 1979 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

3 William McCants and Jarret Brachman, *Militant Ideology Atlas* (West Point, NY: Combating Terrorism Center, 2006).

4 Shortly after, al-`Awlaqi wore out his welcome in the United Kingdom as well due to the increasingly radical nature of his lectures.

5 J.M. Berger, *Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go To War in the Name of Islam* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2011); Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, "As American as Apple Pie: How Anwar al-Awlaqi Became the Face of Western Jihad," International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR), September 2011.

6 Meleagrou-Hitchens, "As American as Apple Pie: How Anwar al-Awlaqi Became the Face of Western Jihad."

7 Albar Sheikh, "Anwar al-Awlaki's Post-Mortem Presence on Urdu Jihadi Forums," October 25, 2011, available at www.albarsheikh.com/2011/10/25/anwar-al-awlakis-post-mortem-presence-on-urdu-jihadi-forums; "Al-Qadisiyyah Media: The Bangla Translation of the Audio Lecture: Constants on the Path of Jihad," available at www.ansar1.info.

8 Anwar al-`Awlaqi, "Constants on the Path of Jihad," audio lecture, 2005.

states that jihad is not tied to a specific land. The explanation offered is that if jihad were tied to a specific land, then jihad would end when that land was conquered by the mujahidin. Since jihad must continue until the Day of Judgment, therefore, it must not be tied to a specific land.[9]

Under the fourth, fifth and sixth constants, al-`Uyayri presented detailed arguments on the semantic definitions of victory and defeat, with an eye toward justifying the continuity of jihad even when it defies conventional logic.

Eleven definitions for victory are provided, only one of which includes standard military victory. Circular logic is well-represented among the definitions. For instance, going on jihad is a victory over Satan, who does not want you to go on jihad; staying with jihad is a victory over one's temptation to leave jihad.[10] According to al-`Awlaqi's translation of al-`Uyayri,

> The fourth meaning of victory… When you go out in the path of Allah, and become a mujahid, you have achieved victory against the ones who try to discourage you from jihad [in the way of Allah]. The ones who speak your tongue and claim to be a Muslim, but are twisting the evidence to try to discourage you from becoming a mujahid.[11]

Some of the definitions have broader ramifications, which can be seen in al-`Awlaqi's later work. For instance, one form of victory is what al-`Uyayri called the "battle of ideas," which al-`Awlaqi reframed as "the battle for hearts and minds." Al-`Awlaqi would later release an entire lecture on "The Battle for Hearts and Minds," expanding his commentary from "Constants."[12]

Al-`Awlaqi's Revisions to Al-`Uyayri

Although much has been made of Anwar al-`Awlaqi's mastery of the English language and Western idiom, these are only tools in the service of his greater skill as an emotionally evocative

orator and storyteller. In line with his strengths, al-`Awlaqi's interpretation of al-`Uyayri's work is a mix of verbatim translations and revisions of varying scale.

Al-`Awlaqi related al-`Uyayri's text in informal and idiomatic language, which is important to expanding its appeal, but his more significant contributions come from an injection of extended storytelling into the treatise. In the original "Constants," al-`Uyayri followed his previously established style of rigorous religious argumentation,[13] marshaling Qur'an and hadith as citations to bolster his arguments, often quoting them in minimalist form to make very narrow points.

Al-`Awlaqi expanded al-`Uyayri's citations into living, breathing stories, often at significantly greater length, transforming the legalistic argument into an emotionally and politically loaded discourse. For example, one of the definitions of victory given under the fifth constant is self-sacrifice for the cause of Allah. Al-`Uyayri cited in a utilitarian manner the story of the "People of the Ditch," based on a reference in the Qur'an subsequently expanded in hadith form.

In the story, a king is persecuting believers in Allah. He orders them to renounce their religion or be thrown into a flaming ditch or trench to die. All of the believers throw themselves in. One woman, carrying her baby, hesitates, and Allah inspires the baby to speak to her, saying "Oh Mother! You are following *al-Haqq* [the truth]! So be firm!" As a result, she carries him into the fire and succeeds in achieving martyrdom.

Al-`Uyayri presented the story in a paragraph of efficient text, as scholarly evidence that maintaining one's religion in the face of death is a form of victory. Al-`Awlaqi, however, told the story in lavish detail, drawing on both his knowledge of the source and his own imagination:

> And the method of their death in itself is so horrific that we can only appreciate how great their

steadfastness was. They were told to jump alive in trenches filled with burning wood. And they were jumping one after another in these trenches, burning to death. They chose the fire of this *dunya* [world] rather than the fire of the hereafter.[14]

In al-`Awlaqi's version, the story of the woman and the child becomes more than just an illustration. For al-`Awlaqi, it represented a broader principle. Since the woman walked up to the trench before hesitating, al-`Awlaqi argued (in a lengthy departure from al-`Uyayri's script) that God provided a miracle to help her complete the act of martyrdom:

> This woman, because she took the first step, and that is the willingness to jump in the trench, when she was about to retreat, Allah helped her. So if you take that first step towards Allah, Allah will make many steps towards you. If you walk towards Allah, Allah will run towards you.[15]

In this manner, al-`Awlaqi transformed al-`Uyayri's perfunctory citation into an emotional journey that engages the listener and broadens the original point to emphasize the importance of taking even one step toward jihad.

In a handful of instances, al-`Awlaqi entirely repurposed al-`Uyayri's original text. During the discussion of definitions of defeat under the sixth constant, for example, al-`Awlaqi respectfully complained that the types of defeat outlined by al-`Uyayri are "all kind of similar." When he came to a section with the Arabic heading "Flattery to the Unbelievers,"[16] al-`Awlaqi announced "I'm going to translate this as 'compromise,'" then proceeded to discuss good and bad forms of compromise with examples specifically tailored to Western Muslims:

> To give an example, you invited a *kafir* [non-believer] over to dinner to give him *da`wa* [call to Islam].

---

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Anwar al-`Awlaqi, "The Battle for Hearts and Minds," audio recording, 2008.

13 For example, "Haqiqat al-harb al-salibiyya al-jadida," cited in *Militant Ideology Atlas*.

14 Al-`Awlaqi, "Constants on the Path of Jihad."

15 Ibid.

16 Translation by Aaron Y. Zelin, researcher, Brandeis University, and curator of Jihadology.net.

Here you have given up some of your *dunya* [worldly status] by inviting him and spending all of that money, for the sake of what? For the sake of religion. So this is something allowed…[In contrast,] you have this *kafir* who's a friend of yours, or he's your boss. All right, he's your boss. And you know that your pay comes through him…So he comes to you and tells you, you know, 'What's this thing, man, about jihad and can you explain to me what jihad means?' And you go, 'Jihad is the jihad of *nafs* [fighting temptation]. And there's nothing in Islam that allows using violence.' Here you're giving away your religion. You're compromising your religion for the sake of what? For the sake of your *dunya*.

This passage illustrates al-`Awlaqi's grasp of the tensions experienced by Western Muslims who believe in the concept of military jihad or who may feel ambivalent about jihadists fighting Western countries. More importantly, it adds what the original text lacks—a clear example of how the principles outlined by al-`Uyayri apply to a real-life situation. Al-`Uyayri provided only a conceptual framework; al-`Awlaqi demonstrated the practical implications of how these concepts might have an impact on his audience, a powerful rhetorical technique.

Arguably failing to take his own advice from the passage above, al-`Awlaqi intentionally omitted from his translation references to Mullah Omar, Usama bin Ladin and al-Qa`ida found in the original text.[17] Given the period during which the lectures were recorded, this likely reflected al-`Awlaqi's interest in avoiding prosecution. It also has the added benefit of making the lecture more generalized and less potentially alienating to people on the verge of radicalization.

Despite several such changes, the vast majority of al-`Awlaqi's "Constants" reflects the original text. Media reports and other analysis often ascribe to al-`Awlaqi the views presented in "Constants." It is important to remember that al-`Awlaqi is an interpreter of "Constants" and not its author. Although al-`Awlaqi took liberties, most of the audio lecture is properly attributed to al-`Uyayri. Al-`Awlaqi clearly shared many of al-`Uyayri's views, but he also translated sections, such as a discussion of *takfiri* ideology,[18] which do not easily mesh with other, more personal works throughout the course of his career. Al-`Awlaqi, for example, demonstrated significant discomfort with what he saw as the indiscriminate use of *takfiri* principles to justify labeling Muslims as apostates.[19]

Influence of "Constants" on Al-`Awlaqi's Later Work

Echoes of "Constants" can be heard throughout al-`Awlaqi's later career. A notable example is his 2008 lecture titled "The Battle for Hearts and Minds," which borrowed heavily from al-`Awlaqi's reinterpretation of al-`Uyayri's "battle of ideas."

For instance, both works cited a 2005 *U.S. News and World Report* article describing a RAND Corporation study that attempted to define "moderate Islam." Al-`Awlaqi's thoughts are far more developed in the 2008 work, which is fundamentally original and tuned specifically to Muslims in the West, but the similarities are apparent to even a casual listener.

More significantly, the influence of "Constants" can be seen in al-`Awlaqi's overt involvement in terrorism since 2009, both operationally and in terms of incitement. As an "operational" leader, al-`Awlaqi could claim virtually no conventional successes. The Christmas Day 2009 bomb plot, carried out by one of his students under his direct guidance, succeeded only in delivering severe burns to the would-be suicide bomber. Al-`Awlaqi tried, unsuccessfully, to get British Airways employee Rajib Karim to facilitate a plot to smuggle another bomb onto an airplane in 2010.[20]

There is only one example of conventional success among the terrorists with whom al-`Awlaqi had direct contact—U.S. soldier Nidal Malik Hasan, who in 2009 killed 13 U.S. military personnel during a shooting spree at the Ft. Hood military base in Texas. Yet even this claim is weak. Al-`Awlaqi disavowed providing any direct guidance for Hasan's attack, a claim that appears to be confirmed by subsequent reporting on the FBI's investigation into e-mail exchanges between the two.[21]

Yet following the definitions in "Constants," al-`Awlaqi celebrated victories found in failure. *Inspire*, the English-language magazine published by al-`Awlaqi and his followers under the flag of AQAP, gloated over a thwarted plot to bomb UPS cargo

> **"Al-`Uyayri provided only a conceptual framework; al-`Awlaqi demonstrated the practical implications of how these concepts might have an impact on his audience, a powerful rhetorical technique."**

planes, despite its conventional failure, citing the success of provoking increased security costs in the West (an additional dimension of thought frequently cited by al-Qa`ida but not explicitly discussed in "Constants").[22] Other issues of *Inspire* discuss the relative merits of conventional victory vs. martyrdom, coming down in favor of the latter. The overall emphasis in *Inspire*, as in "Constants," is on action and preparation rather than victory.[23]

Although "Constants" does not directly address the concept of "lone wolf" terrorism, its principles logically empower such acts, especially its globalization of jihad (which is not

---

17 Al-`Awlaqi, "Constants on the Path of Jihad."

18 Ibid.

19 *Inspire* 5 (2011). Also see "CIA Islam," a recording by Abdullah al-Faisal, which rebukes al-`Awlaqi for having too lenient a view on *takfir*.

20 "Awlaki's Legacy: A Dozen Terror Plots Linked to Al Qaeda Leader," ABC News, September 30, 2011.

21 "Fort Hood: Hasan Asked Awlaki If It Was Okay to Kill American Soldiers," ABC News, December 23, 2009.

22 *Inspire* 3 (2010).

23 *Inspire* 4 (2010).

dependent on a "particular land") and its emphasis on taking any kind of action over taking pragmatic action calculated to achieve a strategic result.

Conclusion

Anwar al-`Awlaqi's inspirational influence has had a far greater impact than his operational role in AQAP.[24] Al-`Awlaqi's death will prevent him from creating new works of incitement, but it will do little to blunt the impact of "Constants" in the future. Today, both the audio and text versions of "Constants" are widely distributed online as downloads, on hosted web pages and through outlets such as YouTube (despite efforts to have it removed).[25]

The original author of "Constants," Yusuf al-`Uyayri, has been dead since 2003, but his original work in Arabic continues to motivate aspiring terrorists.[26] The example of `Abdullah `Azzam demonstrates that jihadist ideologues can measure their shelf-life in decades. `Azzam was killed in 1989, yet he remains one of the most important radicalizing figures in the jihadist milieu.[27] Such examples show that death will not silence al-`Awlaqi's message. The impact of his body of work may ultimately be magnified by the perception among some Muslims that he was unfairly targeted and killed by the United States.

Even in the short time since al-`Awlaqi's death, "Constants on the Path of Jihad" has expanded its reach beyond radicalized Western Muslims with its introduction into new languages and theaters of operation. There is every reason to assume that this trajectory will continue.

J.M. Berger is editor of INTELWIRE.com and author of Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam.

---

24   "Awlaki's Legacy: A Dozen Terror Plots Linked to Al Qaeda Leader."

25   See, for example, www.youtube.com/watch?v=UB1bGrHPwoM, accessed September 18, 2011.

26 Personal interview, online jihadist Abu Suleiman al-Nasser, September 19, 2011.

27 Roshonara Choudhry, who stabbed a British member of parliament in 2010, cited a lecture from `Abdullah `Azzam for why she decided to engage in violence.

The Decline of Jihadist Activity in the United Kingdom

By James Brandon

FOR MORE THAN 15 years, the United Kingdom has been widely viewed as the central hub of Islamist terrorism in the West. Since the 1990s, jihadists radicalized in the United Kingdom have been involved in many ambitious overseas terrorist plots, from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing to the failed Stockholm suicide bombing in December 2010. Radical clerics based in "Londonistan," such as Abu Qatada, have meanwhile incited jihadist violence in North Africa, Europe and throughout the Middle East. In addition, the United Kingdom has itself been targeted. A successful attack by a homegrown terrorist cell in July 2005 on the London transport system killed more than 50. Many other domestic plots, ranging from plans to conduct assassinations and kidnappings to the plot to blow up several trans-Atlantic airliners either failed in their execution or were disrupted by the police and security services. To date, nearly 150 individuals have been convicted of terrorism offenses in the United Kingdom since 2001.[1]

Recently, however, there are indications that the United Kingdom may no longer be such a key center for global jihadism. During the last four years, there has been a steady decline in the number and quality of attempted terrorist attacks either in the United Kingdom or linked to the United Kingdom. During 2010, there was only one attempted Islamist terrorist attack in the United Kingdom when a 21-year old female university student, Roshonara Choudhry, stabbed Stephen Timms, a Labour Party member of parliament, for supporting the Iraq war. Similarly, UK-based plots recently foiled by police posed a much less immediate threat than in previous years. In the most recent case to come to trial, two Pakistani men based in the United Kingdom were convicted in September 2011 of attempting to recruit

---

1 It is worth noting that the bar for conviction is set considerably higher in the United Kingdom than in the United States. Wiretap evidence, for example, cannot be used in court and all forms of "entrapment" are illegal.

British volunteers to join the Taliban in 2008-2009.[2] Significantly, they aimed to support the Taliban's insurgency operations within Afghanistan rather than any global jihadist cause. Notably, in June 2011, MI5, the British internal security service, lowered its assessment of the "threat level" to the United Kingdom from "severe" to "substantial," having previously lowered it from "critical" in July 2007.[3]

This article identifies three reasons why there has been a reduction in jihadist activity in the United Kingdom. First, there has been a decline in jihadist as well as Islamist "gateway" organizations in the United Kingdom. Second, British Muslim communities are less receptive to Islamist and jihadist arguments. Third, the British government's counterterrorism capabilities have improved.

Decline of Jihadist, Islamist and "Gateway" Organizations

During the 1990s and early 2000s, support for both global and national jihadism was entrenched in British Muslim communities and among the "Muslim spokesmen" who had appointed themselves as British Muslims' de facto leaders. In the late 1990s, for example, Inayat Bunglawala, a leader of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), distributed Usama bin Ladin's pro-jihadist *fatawa* and praised him as a "freedom fighter."[4] Meanwhile, key figures from MCB and other Islamist groups laid the groundwork for jihadist recruitment by first presenting "Western" and "Islamic" values as incompatible and by promoting a grievance-based Muslim identity. Second, they argued that solutions for such problems could be resolved through segregating Muslims from mainstream society, creating "Islamic states" in Muslim-majority countries or in extreme cases physically attacking perceived enemies of Islam, from individuals such as the author Salman Rushdie or countries such as the United States. In parallel with such political Islamists, global jihadists meanwhile

---

2   "Former Taliban Jailed for Recruiting Young Men," *Daily Telegraph*, September 9, 2011.

3   "Threat Levels," MI5 Security Service, available at www.mi5.gov.uk/output/threat-levels.html#history.

4   "Top Job Fighting Extremism for Muslim who Praised Bomber," *Daily Telegraph*, August 21, 2005.

used the United Kingdom as a center for propaganda operations, recruitment of jihadists and as a money-raising and logistical hub to support conflicts ranging from Algeria and the Arabian Peninsula to Afghanistan.

Today, the Islamist groups that laid the groundwork for jihadism are in retreat. Jamaat-i-Islami front-groups, such as the MCB, have today mostly moderated their rhetoric and largely stepped back from politics. Formerly prominent Muslim Brotherhood front-groups such as the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) are now all but defunct. Many Brotherhood activists have even dropped their focus on British Muslims and now concentrate solely on the Arab world. For instance, Azzam Tamimi, once a highly active MAB member who praised suicide bombings on the BBC and ceaselessly toured British university campuses, now spends all his time running an Arabic-language satellite channel, al-Hiwar, aimed at the Middle East.[5] In consequence, there are now fewer voices in British Muslim communities promoting Islamist politics and the paranoid "us and them" mindset that helps create jihadist radicalization.

A similar collapse has hit even more radical groups. Hizb al-Tahrir (also known as Hizb-ut-Tahrir), once a "conveyor belt" or "gateway" organization nudging British Muslims toward extremism, is now in rapid decline. In 2002 and 2003, an estimated 6,000 Muslims came to the group's annual conference.[6] By comparison, its 2011 conference, held in London's most heavily Muslim district, attracted only "a few hundred" participants.[7] HT appears to have been fatally damaged by a post-2005 onslaught against the group by high-profile former members,

which accelerated the group's ongoing discrediting among British Muslims.[8] Their defections also helped trigger the resignation of many HT local leaders, leading to a collapse of HT's regional branches.[9] HT has meanwhile failed to promote any new faces and consequently its leaders are today unable to connect with ordinary young Muslims.

Similarly, the overtly pro-jihadist al-Muhajiroun group that once actively connected young British Muslims with active jihadist groups abroad has become more subdued. Although it has refreshed its membership better than HT, most recently through rebranding itself as "Islam4UK" and "Muslims Against Crusades," it increasingly functions as what Jarret Brachman has called a "jihobbyist" group whose members make provocative statements without ever intending to translate them into action.[10] Although al-Muhajiroun formerly acted as a gateway to terrorism, few terrorist plots in the last two to three years have been linked to the group and there is no public evidence that the group is still willing or able to connect British Muslims with militant groups abroad.[11]

In consequence of these changes, it is harder today for British aspiring jihadists either to become radicalized to the point of committing violence or to connect with jihadists abroad. Significantly, the only attempted domestic attack in 2010, the attempted murder of an MP by Roshonara Choudhry, was a classic "lone-wolf" attack carried out by someone unconnected to any UK-based Islamists or extremists; she had been radicalized almost entirely by Anwar al-`Awlaqi's online sermons. The only other significant UK-based plot of 2010, Rajib Karim's embryonic plans to attack an

airliner, was also a fairly decentralized plot that involved a recent immigrant who was already deeply involved in the Jamaatul Mujahidin Bangladesh terrorist group.[12] Simultaneously, the United Kingdom's withdrawal from Iraq (completed in early 2011) has denied radicals a powerful recruiting tool, while the death of Bin Ladin and the rise of the pro-democracy movements in the Middle East seem to have damaged jihadists' self-confidence.

Changes in British Muslim Communities
An additional reason for the decline of both Islamist and jihadist groups is that social, economic and cultural changes in British Muslim communities have reduced demand for jihadism and extremism. For instance, recent polls also point to Islamists' failure to popularize their isolationist, grievance-based narrative. For instance, one 2009 country-wide poll found that 77% of Muslims "identified with the UK" and that Muslims were more likely than non-Muslims to trust British courts and the police—despite intensive Islamist attempts to portray the police as anti-Muslim.[13]

British Muslims also see the United Kingdom and its values as representing freedoms unknown in most Muslim-majority countries, while also valuing such tolerance more generally. One recent poll, for example, found that 47% of Muslims were "proud of how Britain treats gay people."[14] Powerful evidence of this changing mind-set came at the MCB's 2011 annual dinner when Mehdi Hasan, the young political editor of the *New Statesman* magazine, criticized in his keynote speech the MCB's longstanding boycott of Holocaust Memorial Day and told his audience that "Britain is the best place in the Europe to live as a Muslim."[15] This is not a fertile environment for jihadists who preach that non-Muslims are the enemy, that

5 Tamimi's activities nonetheless remain controversial. In 2009, al-Hiwar was found in breach of British broadcasting regulations after the Tunisian Muslim Brotherhood leader, Rachid al-Ghannouchi, used the channel to praise Hamas' use of Qassam rockets against Israel. See "Broadcast Bulletin 12/10/09," Ofcom, available at http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/enforcement/broadcast-bulletins/obb143/.

6 "6,000 Muslims Debate 'Islam and the West,'" Press Association, September 15, 2002; "Thousands Attend Muslim Conference," BBC, August 24, 2003.

7 Personal interview, anti-extremism activist who picketed the conference, London, October 2011.

8 The three principle defectors are Ed Husain, Shiraz Maher, and Maajid Nawaz.

9 An irreverent analysis of this trend is provided by Shiraz Maher at the United Kingdom's "Harry's Place" blog. See Shiraz Maher, "Hizb-ut-Tahrir Implodes," HurryUpHarry.org, June 19, 2011.

10 Jarret Brachman, *Global Jihadism: Theory and Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

11 For further details on al-Muhajiroun's links to terrorism, see Raffaello Pantucci, "The Tottenham Ayatollah and the Hook-Handed Cleric: An Examination of All Their Jihadi Children," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 33:3 (2010).

12 Raffaello Pantucci, "Al-Awlaki Recruits Bangladeshi Militants for Strike on the United States," *Terrorism Monitor* 9:7 (2011).

13 "British Muslims Most Patriotic in Europe," *Daily Telegraph*, December 13, 2009.

14 To review the YouGov survey results, visit http://today.yougov.co.uk/sites/today.yougov.co.uk/files/yg-archives-pol-demos-patriotism-ge_280611.pdf.

15 A video of this speech can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=IADNZNvkuZA, accessed October 31, 2011.

democracy is *haram* and that true justice can only exist in a totalitarian "Islamic state."

Government Counterterrorism Work

The British state has also played an important role in reducing the Islamist terrorist threat. Several key laws have substantially reduced the space for active terrorist recruiters to operate. The 2006 Terrorism Act, which criminalized the "glorification" of terrorism, has clearly prevented jihadists from encouraging violence. Key radicalizing figures who directly incited terrorism such as Abu Hamza, Abdullah Faisal and Omar Bakri have additionally been imprisoned, deported or encouraged to relocate overseas. The security services' mapping of radical Islamist networks has meanwhile allowed aspiring terrorists to be identified at an early stage. This has led to some aspiring terrorists being arrested while still planning attacks, while others have been steered away from violence through the police's "Channel" program, the most successful part of the government's larger "Prevent" counterterrorism strategy.[16]

Challenges Remain

Britain's long struggle with jihadism is not over. Radicalization remains a serious problem on some university campuses and in prisons.[17] Furthermore, many Muslim communities in impoverished towns in northern England remain isolated from mainstream society, and in some of these areas conservative Islam is growing in popularity. In some larger urban areas, such as parts of Birmingham, London and Luton, where Islamist groups have deliberately entrenched themselves in the local political and religious fabric of society, radicalization remains a clear threat. In East London, for instance, Jamaat-i-Islami sympathizers have used their control over East London Mosque, a multimillion dollar complex, to spread intolerant and paranoid Islamist thinking into local Muslim communities. There are also scattered reports of young British Muslims

traveling to Somalia to join al-Shabab, a group aligned with al-Qa`ida, or to join the Taliban in Afghanistan.[18] Online radicalization, and the associated threat of lone wolf attackers, is also a danger, as shown by the Roshonara Choudhry case.

Conclusion

Terrorist movements rarely disappear overnight. The United Kingdom itself still battles with Irish Republican terrorism more than a decade after Tony Blair signed a peace deal with Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Irish Republican Army. Islamist terrorist attacks in the United Kingdom remain possible. As recently as mid-September 2011, British police arrested and charged six men and a woman in Birmingham on suspicion of preparing terrorist attacks.[19] It is also likely that some future jihadist attacks overseas will have connections to the United Kingdom.

Nevertheless, such events, however dramatic, should not obscure the fact that key social, political and economic trends are slowly but powerfully undercutting jihadism's *raison d'etre* in the United Kingdom. Indeed, a powerful feedback cycle is arguably starting to develop in which the declining influence of Islamist and jihadist groups accelerates and facilitates the integration of British Muslims, which in turn reduces the grassroots demand for such grievance-based groups further. One can hope that the bloody "golden age" of British jihadism may be drawing to a close.

James Brandon is Director of Research and Communications at the Quilliam Foundation, a counter-extremism think-tank based in London.

---

16 According to the latest review of the "Prevent" strategy, 1,120 individuals (including right-wing extremists) have been referred to Channel. For details, see "Prevent Strategy," UK Home Office, 2011. p. 59.

17 "Radicalisation on British University Campuses," Quilliam Foundation, 2010.

18 For British radicals in Somalia, see "My Brother and the Deadly Lure of al-Shabab Jihad," BBC, November 2, 2010. In September 2011, three UK-based men were convicted of helping British Muslims travel to fight in Afghanistan. For details, see "Former Taliban Jailed for Recruiting Young Men on Streets of Britain," *Daily Telegraph*, September 9, 2011.

19 "Birmingham Terror Arrests: Seventh Man to Face Charges," BBC, September 29, 2011.

Understanding the Role of Tribes in Yemen

By Charles Schmitz

YEMEN IS FAMOUS for its tribes. All observers agree that tribes are powerful political actors in Yemen and central to Yemeni culture and society. Yet there is no agreement on the precise definition of a tribe, and there is no consensus on the nature of the relationship between Yemeni tribes and the Yemeni state. As a result, there is a broad consensus that tribes are important in understanding Yemeni politics and society at the same time there is widespread confusion about what a tribe is. People often talk past each other in the conversation about tribes in Yemen.

One way to think about the concept of tribe might be as a form of social organization with its own ethics, system of justice and politics. This view of tribes is focused on the internal affairs of the tribe and speaks about tribal custom, or *urf*. Another way to think of tribes might be their independent force in relation to the state. This view of the tribe focuses on their "foreign relations" with the rest of society. A third way to think of tribes, or tribalism, is as an ethic or set of political values in a national context. This view of tribalism is focused on the ways that tribalism is used in national politics for a political agenda. Related to this third view of tribalism is the role that certain tribal leaders play in national politics. These tribal leaders are playing roles that are not "tribal" in the first sense of the word, but rather they are fashioning a role for themselves in national politics, even while tribal social organization, the first sense of tribe, may be unraveling.

Therefore, this article attempts to provide clarity on the meaning of "tribe" in Yemen. One important reason to recognize these different angles from which to view tribes in Yemen is that the current overly broad conceptualization of tribe may miss important changes that are occurring in Yemeni society today.

Overestimating Tribal Power in Yemen

While the meaning of tribes may not be fixed, Westerners are certainly fixated on tribes. The prominent Yemeni political analyst Abdul Ghani al-Iryani recently argued that Westerners overestimate the role of tribes in Yemeni politics in general. He is focusing on the view of the tribe as an external fighting force, which is a popular conception among Westerners. No more than 20% of Yemenis belong to a tribe that has armed capabilities, according to al-Iryani:

> Yemen is viewed as highly tribal, which is actually a misrepresentation. I define tribal as being those whose primary identification is tribal, i.e. if the sheikh calls them to war, they come to his aid. And that applies to about 20 per cent of the population. The other 80 per cent are either urban or peasants, and they are non-tribal. So the over-exaggeration of the tribal nature of Yemen is misplaced...I do not think Yemen is as tribal as the regime tries to present it to the world, or as foreign observers sometimes suggest.[1]

In fact, in Yemen in the last decade much of the talk has been on the relative decline of the tribal element in Yemeni politics, rather than its ascendance. The recent battle in Hasaba district of the capital at the end of May 2011 between the Ali Abdullah Salih government and the leaders of the Hashid tribal confederation seemed to confirm the growing limits to tribal power in modern Yemen. When the clashes began in Hasaba and Sadiq al-Ahmar, the leader of the Hashid tribal confederation, called on his tribes to come to his defense in Sana`a, those that view the tribes as the key to power in Yemen predicted that Salih's rule was finished. In their view, Salih had broken the alliance with his key tribal backers and had in fact turned on them, attacking the most powerful tribal confederation in Yemen and now they were being called to arms by their leader. People conjured images of the famous sacking of Sana`a in 1948 after forces loyal to Imam Yahya regained control, or the sacking of Aden after the war in 1994.

Yet what those who tend to overestimate tribal power in Yemen forget is that just as often in Yemeni history the powerful tribes are shown to not be so powerful. In the famous siege of 1967-1968, the royalist tribes surrounding Sana`a were unable to penetrate the city's defenses. In August 2011, when Sadiq al-Ahmar called upon the tribes to come to his defense in Sana`a, they were stopped outside the city by forces loyal to Salih. Hashid and Bakil are the famous "wings" of the imam, the powers that guard Yemen's state, but their role is as much one of legend as reality.

Tribal power is not only overestimated by Westerners, but perhaps a more damaging problem is that tribes are misconstrued by many Westerners leading to a misleading picture of tribes and tribalism in Yemeni state and society. Some analysts have argued that what lies beyond the city limits is tribal territory beyond the reach of the Yemeni state.[2] This is a simplistic view of tribes and their relationship to the state in Yemen, but unfortunately a common one perhaps inspired by the historical legacy of fascination with the Western experience in the United States as lawless territory. Many people seem to imagine that Yemen's territory is divided into a mosaic of tribal territories and that the state controls the city limits at best, and even then in a rudimentary form only. In this reified view of tribal society, a map could be made delineating the extent of each tribal territory and its leaders could be listed in a database spatially correlated to tribal territories. Dealing with Yemeni society in this case would be easy, one would just figure out who controlled the territory and who was in charge of that particular tribe and then proceed to negotiate with the proper tribal authorities. Such a neat and trim picture of tribal society is an illusory, but powerfully attractive framework to outsiders.

The British had a similar vision of tribal entities on the Arabian Peninsula and this view became the basis of their policies in South Arabia as well as in the Arabian Gulf.[3] Not only does this vision of tribal politics distort the

nature of tribal territoriality and tribal politics, forcing the square of tribal social organization and territoriality into the round mold of the nation-state, but it also violently altered local politics. The British became local "tribe makers" and "shaykh makers" by giving official recognition to some tribes and leadership sections within particular tribes, but not others. Ironically, the British saw themselves as preservers of local tradition rather than agents of powerful social change.[4] The current attempts at dividing Yemen's territory into distinct "tribal" areas by Westerners are simply another iteration of a similarly misguided exercise at reading local society.

The idea that the state's power ends at the city limits is a myth at best, sometimes propagated by tribes themselves. Drawing such a clear geographic delimitation between tribe and state is a gross misrepresentation of the myriad of complex relationships between the state and local tribes. In his recent book, Isa Blumi considers the confusion about the concept of tribe such that he proposes abandoning the term tribe altogether.[5] He is not alone. Marta Mundy similarly suggested that the concept of tribe be abandoned and that one should speak of local communities, a term adopted by Blumi as well.[6] Clearly, some clarification is needed.

Geographic Diversity

The first factor that contributes to this confusion is that Yemeni society is very diverse and local social organizations, such as the tribe, vary in their characteristics across Yemen's geography. Most are familiar with the generalization that tribes in the region around Sana`a and further north to Sa`da are powerful military and political units whereas tribes in the middle, southern, coastal, and in the east in Hadramawt are much less focused on their martial capabilities

1 "Yemen: 'Chaos by Design,'" al-Jazira, March 17, 2011.

2 Gregory Johnsen and Christopher Boucek, "The Well Runs Dry," *Foreign Policy*, February 20, 2009.
3 R.S. Zahlan, *The Making of the Modern Gulf States* (Reading, UK: Ithaca Press, 1998).

4 John Willis, "Making Yemen Indian: Rewriting the Boundaries of Imperial Arabia," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41 (2009): pp. 23-38.
5 Isa Blumi, *Chaos in Yemen* (New York: Routledge Press, 2010).
6 Marta Mundy, *Domestic Government: Kinship, Community and Polity in North Yemen* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1995).

and more on internal social issues.[7] Yet within this general distribution of tribal characteristics there is still great variation. The three most prominent studies in English on tribes are all about tribes in the north, yet they come to different conclusions about the nature of tribes and in particular the relationship between the tribe and the state.[8]

Local Foci

In Shelagh Weir's masterful ethnography of tribes in the Haraz region west of Sa`da, tribes are "small sovereignties," whose leadership jealously guards their local autonomy from the state. Weir sees tribes a refuge from the abuses of the state.[9] Many share the idea that when the state is unable to provide local services, tribal tradition emerges to fill the gap. The view that the border between the state and the tribe is mutually exclusive and tribes take up the slack where states are incapable is common in both the literature in English and in Arabic. The greater the power of the state, the weaker the tribes; as state power decays, tribes reconstitute themselves to provide social order where the state cannot.

This view that tribes are local sovereignties does capture an important aspect of tribes. Tribes are geographically limited social organizations whose interests are primarily focused on their own local territories. Tribes as local social organizations are primarily concerned about the relative balance of power in their local geography. Their immediate neighbors are their competitors and tribes are interested in maintaining their power relative to their neighbors. As such, tribes will invite a political party, for example, to back them because a rival political party has supported the tribe opposite them. The tribe's invitation to a political party is

not ideological at all. The members of the tribe do not adhere to the perspective or ideas of the party; rather, they are interested in the resources that the party offers. Tribes are primarily locally interested and their behavior is most strongly shaped by their calculations of the local balance of power.

One result of the local focus of tribes is the continually fractured nature of tribal politics. Tribes are difficult to unite because their interests are local, not national or even regional. When the al-Ahmar brothers defected from Salih's regime after the March 18, 2011 massacre of protestors in Sana`a, for example, they boldly declared that the powerful tribal confederation of Hashid and Bakil had joined the protestors in Change Square. Observers familiar with tribes in Yemen, however, would be suspicious of such claims. The al-Ahmar brothers are indeed traditional leaders of the Hashid tribal confederation, the most coherent and strongest of any tribal confederation in Yemen, but tribes are not civil society organizations. They do not follow the directives of their leaders; they consider the directive a strong suggestion, but a suggested course of action only. Of course, many tribes within the Hashid confederation took the opportunity of the al-Ahmar's declaration of loyalty to the protestors to gain local leverage by siding with Ali Abdullah Salih instead of the al-Ahmars. The second most powerful tribe within the Hashid confederation sided with Salih, not al-Ahmar. This is logical from a tribal standpoint; tribes as local geographic units of society are primarily interested in their local interests.

Contingent Borders and Loyalties

The immediate difficulty with this view of tribes as local sovereignties, however, is that the borders between tribes are often difficult to discern; the units of tribes are not readily distinguishable on the ground. Where one tribe begins and another ends is not always clear. Tribes themselves will cite their traditions, saying that their tribes come from ancient roots. Indeed, there are very old roots to some Yemeni tribes. The famous Yemeni historian of the 10th century, Hamdani, chronicles some tribes that still exist today in the same regions. Yet tribes are often created hastily as well. At one level, a tribe is just a bunch of

people who have decided to follow a particular leader at some particular point in time. Tribal tradition says that tribes are blood relations, that members of a tribe are descendants of a common ancestor. The kin relation is fictive, though. A particular member of a tribe can switch allegiances if his request for backing from his new tribe is accepted.

Adherence to a tribe is not automatic; it is not a matter of blood. Tribesmen do not follow their leaders simply because tradition tells them to. Allegiance and loyalty is contingent upon the calculations of each individual member in each particular circumstance. On a particular issue, some tribesmen may agree with the stance of their shaykhs, and in another they will differ. The tribe's backing of a particular individual member of the tribe will depend upon circumstances and the calculations of each individual tribesman in each particular instance. Tribes are not like military units with a commander and soldiers that follow orders. The relationship between the tribesman, his fellow tribesmen, and the tribal leadership is much more contingent and consensual than is often portrayed. Tribesmen are not the foot soldiers of an ethnic army led by the local shaykh.

Furthermore, the distinction between what is a tribe and what is not a tribe is even more difficult to discern. The most distinguishing characteristic of the tribe, perhaps, is their system of justice. It is the "tribal order," as the title of Weir's book implies, that distinguishes the tribe, and the tribal system of mediated justice is a well studied aspect of tribes.[10] As has been pointed out, however, every Yemeni village or city neighborhood will have a group of elders who will administer local affairs, including justice. Local politics are built around family ties in Yemen, whether in tribal regions or simply in the village or town. The Yemeni state is incapable of providing for local order, so powerful clans provide order. This order, however, is not the order of a uniform code with a police force; rather, order in the village or in the tribe is provided by the mediation of powerful leaders. Disputants bring their claims to elders or shaykhs who contact the opposing side in a tradition

7 Adel Sharjabi ed., *al-Qasr wa al-Diwan: al-dor al-siyyasi-yyi lil-qabila fi al-Yemen* (Sana`a: Yemeni Human Rights Observer, 2009).

8 Shelagh Weir, *A Tribal Order: Politics and Law in the Mountains of Yemen* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007); Steven Caton, *"Peaks of Yemen I Summon": Poetry as Cultural Practice in a North Yemeni Tribe* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990); Paul Dresch, *Tribes, Government, and History in Yemen* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

9 Weir, *A Tribal Order: Politics and Law in the Mountains of Yemen*.

10 Ibid.

of mediation between opposing power blocs. The threat of revenge and the fear of chaos, or the desire to preserve some sense of order, brings the disputants to the home of a powerful leader to request arbitration and settlement. This is a large part of tribal tradition, but it is in some sense indistinguishable from the mediation of local clans or elders in a village. This may be why the estimates of the proportion of Yemenis that live in tribes vary so greatly. Some say that only about 20% of Yemenis live in tribal societies, whereas others claim that 80% of Yemenis live in tribal societies.

Tribal/State Relations

More critically, the border between the state and the tribes is more difficult to discern than is often perceived. The view that tribes take up the slack where the state cannot reach or even resists the state's encroachments, as is seen in Weir's detailed history, captures only part of the relationship between the state and tribal organizations. Muhammed al-Thahiri describes three general relationships between the state and the tribe: alliance, hostility, and mutual tolerance. Contrary to the view that state power ends at the city limits, the state actually rules through the tribes by cultivating alliances with particular tribes and their leaders. These alliances are always predicated on local knowledge of tribal politics that allow the state maximum advantage in local circumstances. The state's alliances with particular tribes automatically imply that the state will be in opposition to other tribes. The state allows some tribes to live as they wish in a relationship of mutual distance.

Therefore, tribal politics are the politics of the state. Salih is a master of local politics in Yemen, and this is one of the reasons he has held onto power for so long.

State as Arbitrator

Al-Thahiri proposed an alternative view of the Yemeni state that he derived from his reading of Ibn Khaldun's famous *Muqadama*.[11] Ibn Khaldun described the power of social cohesion in rural areas and the degrading effect of these ties

in urban areas. As a result, empires are continually renewed by rural revolts that sweep away established powers in the cities and establish new empires. In the Yemeni case, al-Thahiri proposed that the tribal power that captures the state is not always able to completely establish the state's power and overcome rural resistance. The Yemeni case is an example of a partial conquest of the state by rural tribes, in the view of al-Thahiri. The state in this case is unable to overcome the power of tribes and as such it mediates between tribes rather than conquering them. Al-Thahiri calls this the "arbitration state." Rather than rule directly, the state rules by arbitrating among local and regional powers.

Certainly, many observers have noted that the Yemeni state is often seen as "the big tribe" by Yemeni tribes in the sense that they relate to the state as they would a tribe. People describe how tribesmen will slaughter bulls before a government agency or before parliament in an attempt to obligate the concerned state parties into addressing the tribesmen's affairs. The state itself will often relate to tribesmen or tribal leaders using the language of the tribe. Ali Abdullah Salih is a master of this discourse. Conflicts between the state and tribes are resolved through the medium of mediation using tribal language, as if the state were a tribal party to the conflict.[12] In this sense, the Yemeni regime is served by the continuance of tribal relations; rather than the state and the tribe being mutually opposed, here the state has an interest in furthering tribal social organization.

The State Creating Tribes

In fact, in some cases the state actually creates tribes. After the war in 1994, the Salih regime attempted to rebuild tribal social organization in southern Yemen as a means of extending its control into the territories of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP).[13] The YSP had effectively destroyed tribal customs, and Salih's regime saw an opportunity to build new

political institutions in the south on a basis that the Salih regime understood and could control. For a period after the war, there was proliferation of shaykhs in the south as people vied to become leaders of the newly tribalized south Yemen. The Salih regime compiled long lists of state-recognized shaykhs and their tribes, just as the British had done earlier. In this case, instead of the tribe replacing the state where the state is incapable, the state is creating the tribe to extend its influence and enhance its capabilities.

The Tribes Creating the State

Just as the boundaries of the state extend deep into tribal relations, tribal power also extends into the state. The Yemeni parliament has always been composed of a disproportionate number of tribal shaykhs, and tribal leaders command the heights of the military and security apparatus. Tribal leaders are also leaders of what are considered modern civil society organizations such as political parties. Tribal leaders are sometimes big business leaders as well, such as Hamid al-Ahmar who is possibly one of the wealthiest men in Yemen. Some Yemeni academics argue that tribal leaders saw the development of institutions and organizations of civil society under the liberalized unity government in 1990 as a threat to their power. In the former north Yemen, the Yemen Arab Republic, political parties had been banned because they were seen as contrary to traditional Yemeni values. When the new Republic of Yemen was created under the guise of liberal democracy, tribal leaders feared that civil society organizations would replace the role of tribal leaders as mediators between state power and individual citizens/tribesmen. As a result, tribal leaders attempted to occupy and co-opt civil society organizations to maintain the dominance of tribal leaders and ideas of tribal ethics and tribal institutions in Yemeni culture.[14]

Civil society organizations can extend into tribal politics as well. The fighting in al-Jawf is between tribes supporting the political party Islah and tribes supporting Abdul Malik al-Huthi.

11 Muhammed Muhsin al-Thahiri, *al-Dor al-Siyyasiyyi lil-Qabila fi al-Yemen* (al-Qahira: Maktabat Madbuli, 1996); Muhammed Muhsin al-Thahiri, *al-Mujtam'a wa al-Dawla* (al-Qahira: Maktabat Madbuli, 2004).

12 Paul Dresch and Bernard Haykel, "Stereotypes and Political Styles: Islamists and Tribesfolk in Yemen," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 27 (1995).

13 Blumi; Serge D. Elie, "State-Community Relations in Yemen: Soqotra's Historical Formation as a Sub-National Polity," *History and Anthropology* 20:4 (2009).

14 Sharjabi; Sameer al-Abdali, *Al-Thaqafa al-Dimuqratia fi al-Hayat al-Siyyasiyya lil Qabilat al-Yemen* (Beirut: Merkaz Dirasat al-Wahdah al-Arabiyya, 2007).

Tribes have lined upon on either side of the conflict between Ali Abdullah Salih and the Yemeni opposition, and tribes have sided with the protestors in Change Square and against them.

Tribes and Social Change

Furthermore, "tribes" vary not only geographically but temporally as well. Tribes are not immune to social change. As much as people can cling to tradition in their conservative impulse to preserve time honored custom against the uncertainties of social change, what is seen as tradition is always interpreted and lived in the present. As such, "traditional values" may in fact be the purveyors of major social change. Paul Dresch, Shelagh Weir, and Steven Caton all point to the possibility of social change occurring in Yemen that will alter the nature of tribal social organization. There are strong signs that education and economic opportunities are changing tribes. Certainly the presence of tribesmen in doctorate programs in foreign universities and atop social institutions such as chambers of commerce and political parties, as well as non-profit organizations, indicates that changes are afoot.[15]

Perhaps the biggest sign of change underway is the large tribal presence in Yemen's Change Square. Tribesmen as individuals left their homes and abandoned their weapons against the wishes of their shaykhs in many cases to join the protestors in Change Square. Equally disgruntled tribesmen joined the ranks of the rebellion led by Abdul Malik al-Huthi against the wishes of their tribal leaders.[16] In Yemen, people speak of the "city shaykh" who has moved to Sana`a to occupy political or administrative positions in the state or has become rich in commerce, and who has lost touch with conditions among the tribesmen. Many tribesmen in rural areas are as disgruntled with the economy and politics in Yemen as those in Change Square. New transportation and communication technology as

well as educational opportunities have opened a wider world onto rural Yemen giving people greater opportunities than in the past. Change is occurring among tribes and in rural Yemen as much as in the modern cities.

Conclusion

Tribe and tribalism have very different meanings since their manifestations vary in different parts of Yemen and because these words refer to quite different phenomena as well. The meaning of tribe is also changing in modern circumstances. A tribe can refer to a local social organization in a particular place in Yemen, and these local organizations can differ tremendously depending upon geography. For example, the tribes close to Sana`a are critical players in Yemeni national politics whereas the tribes of the eastern desert are isolated groups that have little influence on Yemeni politics in the capital. Most Yemeni tribes are sedentary and traditionally agriculturalists whereas some of the eastern tribes are more mobile and based upon the management of livestock. Other tribes in the Hadramawt region are like community associations that manage the affairs of local merchants. These tribal groupings, limited in their geographic reach, are profoundly local in their interests and behavior. The behavior of tribes is often best understood by first looking to these local calculations of the balance of power in local settings.

Another meaning of tribe is tribal social organization as a distinctive system of justice and maintenance of order and security through the institution of the powerful mediator, the tribal shaykh. This institution depends upon the martial capabilities of individual tribesmen, their ability to present a credible threat of retribution for injustices that can then be mediated and settled through the negotiations of elders and tribal leaders. This is part of what Weir refers to as the tribal order and is intimately related to the concept of tribal *urf*.

Tribalism can also mean an ethic, a set of values that are understood as distinctly Yemeni, and that are supportive of certain national political agendas.[17] In this sense, Dresch and

Bernard Haykel can say that tribalism as a social organization in Sanhan, the tribe of President Salih, is dead, at the same time people speak of the power of Sanhan in the Yemeni state. Sanhani tribesmen occupy the pinnacles of power in the security and military apparatus, but tribal social organization within Sanhan is non-existent. Positions of power are delegated to Sanhani tribesmen, but the institutions of the local tribe are no longer relevant (and many Sanhanis have been left to poverty in the shuffle as well). Tribalism here is a relationship of trust used to dominate a national state that is very dangerous to rule—past Yemeni leaders were either killed or exiled.

In the literature on Yemen, tribe is used in different ways such that the word has almost no meaning. To better grasp developments in Yemen, tribe needs to be more precisely specified and the different meanings need to be differentiated. Clearly, there is a difference between the tribes that Weir calls "small sovereignties" that are resistant to the encroachment of state officials and the dominant role that the al-Ahmar brothers play at the pinnacle of Yemeni politics from within the state, yet both are referred to as "tribes." Both are accurate and represent significant aspects of Yemeni society as well.

If one is to understand Yemeni society and politics and the changes they are undergoing, it is essential to be far more specific in the use of the word "tribe" when writing about Yemen.

Charles Schmitz is a professor of Geography at Towson University in Baltimore, Maryland. He is currently president of the American Institute of Yemeni Studies and a fellow at the Middle East Institute in Washington.

15   Sarah Phillips, "What Comes Next in Yemen? Al-Qaeda, the Tribes, and State-Building," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 2010.

16   Barak Salmoni, Bryce Loidolt, and Madeleine Wells, *Regime and Periphery in Northern Yemen: The Huthi Phenomena* (Washington, D.C.: The RAND Corporation, 2010).

17   Lisa Weeden, *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and*

Performance in Yemen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Al-Shabab's Setbacks in Somalia

By Christopher Anzalone

AL-SHABAB, THE SOMALI Islamist-insurgent movement seeking to oust the UN- and U.S.-backed Transitional Federal Government (TFG), is currently facing the most serious set of challenges to its continued control of most of central and southern Somalia.[1] The recent Mogadishu offensive by the 9,000-man African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) military force and the TFG, the renewed offensives by pro-TFG Somali Sufi militias collectively known as Ahlu-Sunna wal-Jama (ASWJ), and the onset of the most serious famine to hit Africa in at least a generation[2] have combined to create a major set of challenges to al-Shabab's continued control of territory and possibly its long-term unity as an insurgent movement.

This article will assess the current state of al-Shabab as a viable insurgent movement in the midst of battlefield setbacks and the increasing pressures of the famine. The recent strategic decisions of the movement will be analyzed through the lens of how al-Shabab seeks to portray itself and its actions to audiences both inside and outside the country.[3] The article will examine the evolution of al-Shabab's media campaign in the midst of these setbacks, insurgent attempts to mask its setbacks by projecting a carefully-constructed self-image as a movement that is still capable of governing territory, a renewed outreach by insurgent leaders to the country's powerful clans, and the media portrayal of the movement's famine relief efforts.

Military Pressures and Strategic Withdrawal from Mogadishu

Al-Shabab's already limited military resources and manpower, estimated to number only 5,000-9,000 frontline fighters, have been stretched thin by the simultaneous offensives by AMISOM and the TFG in Mogadishu, their ASWJ allies in regions along Somalia's western borders, and the recent Kenyan incursion in the south toward the vital port city of Kismayo. The insurgents have already lost control of the valuable taxing ground of Mogadishu's Bakara Market and now are facing the threat of also losing Kismayo's tax revenues. Mounting casualties on the battlefield and the need for more field troops forced al-Shabab to launch recruitment drives, sometimes by force, in an effort to bolster its frontline fighting force, which it calls Jaysh al-`Usrah (The Army of Hardship/Difficulty).[4] Insurgent leaders have also attempted to elicit active military support from Somalia's socially powerful clans, with mixed results.[5]

These military and resource constraints, together with the logistical pressures of dealing with the worsening famine, were likely the primary factors that led to al-Shabab leaders' decision to withdraw most of their fighters from Mogadishu in mid-August 2011.[6] Despite premature claims that the insurgents had been "driven out," al-Shabab remains active in some of the city's districts, mostly in outlying neighborhoods and suburbs. Al-Shabab remains capable of carrying out attacks inside districts of the city ostensibly under AMISOM and TFG control.[7]

Insurgent Media Messaging in the Midst of Battlefield Pressure

Al-Shabab, in the midst of these setbacks, has attempted to present itself as winning significant victories on the battlefield against AMISOM, the TFG, and ASWJ. The insurgent movement has publicized numerous attacks and pitched battles with these forces, many of them also verified by media sources not affiliated with al-Shabab. The insurgents have also sought to sow dissent within the ranks of both the TFG and AMISOM military forces, both by publicizing its killing or capture of AMISOM soldiers[8] and claiming the "repentance and surrender" of at least two dozen TFG soldiers and ASWJ militiamen since early March.[9] Many of

---

1 Christopher Anzalone, "Military Success but Political Failure: The Fight against Al-Shabab in Somalia," Open Security, June 28, 2011.

2 "The Worst Famine to Hit Africa in 60 Years," Relief International, August 11, 2011.

3 The movement's press statements, conferences, videos, and photographs provide a wealth of information about the evolving efforts of al-Shabab to shape its public image in the eyes of in-country and diaspora Somalis as well as internationally beyond the Somali community. These primary sources are particularly important because of the inability for researchers to do extensive field work in most of central and southern Somalia, both in insurgent-held areas and those territories nominally under AMISOM and TFG control. Al-Shabab's media materials certainly must be used with care since they are a form of propaganda that seeks to portray the movement's side of events while glossing over or neglecting negative news and alternative interpretations. Insurgent claims made in their media materials can often be cross-checked with reports from local and international media outlets. Al-Shabab's primary sources are most useful for examining how the insurgent movement itself wishes to be seen, how it portrays itself to its audiences, Somali and non-Somali alike.

4 Ibrahim Mohamed, "Somali Rebels in Recruitment Push to Repel Offensive," Reuters, March 1, 2011; Mohamed Ahmed, "African Somalia Force Sees Progress against Rebels," Reuters, March 5, 2011; "Ahlu Sunna Threatens Purging Al Shabaab from Central Country," Shabelle Media Network, August 27, 2011.

5 Christopher Anzalone, "Harakat al-Shabab & Somalia's Clans," al-Wasat Blog, March 8, 2011; Christopher Anzalone, "Harakat al-Shabab Continues to Court Somalia's Clans as Hasan Dahir Aweys Assumes a More Public Role," al-Wasat Blog, March 21, 2011.

6 Abdi Guled and Katharine Houreld, "Taxes Hastened Somalia's Famine, Militant Retreat," Associated Press, October 1, 2011.

7 Geoffrey York, "Fear of al-Shabab Brings Mogadishu to a Standstill," *Globe & Mail*, September 16, 2011.

8 "Crusader Soldier from the Burundian Forces Captured," al-Shabab statement, February 24, 2011; "Video Showing the Burundian Prisoner [captured by] Harakat al-Shabab al-Mujahideen," Global Islamic Media Front, March 5, 2011. Also see Christopher Anzalone, "Harakat al-Shabab Display AMISOM Prisoner, Casualties, & Captured Equipment as AMISOM & Somalia's Transitional Federal Government Launch 'Offensive,'" Views from the Occident Blog, February 25, 2011.

9 "Surrender of a Military Car and 3 Soldiers in the Islamic District of Juba," al-Shabab statement, May 25, 2011; "Surrender of a Soldier from the Militias of Apostasy in the Islamic District of Hiraan," al-Shabab statement, June 9, 2011; "Repentance and Surrender of a Soldier from the Government of Apostasy in the Islamic District of Hiraan," al-Shabab statement, June 13, 2011; "Surrender and Repentance of a Soldier in the Islamic District of Hiraan," al-Shabab statement, August 25, 2011; "Surrender and Repentance of 2 Soldiers in the Islamic District of Juba," al-Shabab statement, August 29, 2011; "Repentance and Surrender of 14 Soldiers in the Islamic District of Middle Shabelle," al-Shabab statement, September 25, 2011; "Repentance and Surrender of 2 Soldiers from the Government of Apostasy in the Islamic District of Hiraan," al-Shabab statement, September 28, 2011. These statements were released by al-Shabab on internet forums used by Sunni jihadists and have been collected and saved by the author. Hashi Muhammad Farah, who al-Shabab claims was a fighter "in the ranks of the Militias of Apostasy," surrendered to insurgent forces in Hiraan on August 24. See "Surrender and Repentance of a Soldier in the Islamic District of Hiraan,"

these surrenders claimed by al-Shabab occurred in the district of Hiraan, where intense fighting has occurred between insurgents and the ASWJ, particularly around the city of Beledweyne.

Al-Shabab often releases photographs of AMISOM soldiers it has killed or captured as well as military equipment acquired in insurgent attacks.[10] These photographs often show the ID cards of Ugandan or Burundian soldiers from the AMISOM force. Al-Shabab's spokesman, 'Ali Mahamoud Rage, has hosted regular press conferences where the insurgent movement displays its prisoners, those it has killed, and captured AMISOM equipment. These public displays are carefully staged media events meant to dishearten both rank-and-file AMISOM soldiers as well as the Ugandan and Burundian populations at home. The insurgent movement also frequently claims to have inflicted severe defeats and casualties on AMISOM, the TFG, and ASWJ to portray itself as continuing to remain a dangerous and capable military force despite mounting battlefield setbacks.[11] The insurgents' continued ability to carry out high-profile attacks, such as the June assassination of TFG Interior Minister 'Abdi Shakur Sheikh Hasan by a suicide bomber, assist in this self-portrayal of strength and strategic prowess.[12] To show its continued ability to operate within Mogadishu amidst claims by the TFG and AMISOM that its fighters had been scoured from the city, al-Shabab released a 15-minute video in early September showing its snipers killing and wounding AMISOM and TFG soldiers.[13]

Masking Setbacks? Broadcasting Insurgent Governance

Despite the claims of continued strength in insurgent statements, there are signs that al-Shabab's senior leaders and regional administrations became increasingly concerned about "betrayals" from civilians as its battlefield losses to AMISOM and the TFG mounted in Mogadishu during the spring and summer. Based on al-Shabab's own statements, at least six residents of Mogadishu and the surrounding district of Banadir have been executed by the insurgents on charges of spying for the TFG and AMISOM.[14] These executions suggest that al-Shabab feels increasingly threatened by the willingness of residents in some areas it controls to "collaborate" with its enemies.

Al-Shabab's media output since the AMISOM/TFG offensive began has not been limited to battlefield reports and claims of victory against "the Crusaders and Apostates." A significant number of the statements have dealt with seemingly mundane issues of governance. Since taking control of vast amounts of territory in southern and central Somalia by the second half of 2008, al-Shabab has attempted to project an image of itself as being a capable, just, and even beneficent insurgent government.[15] The number of statements that the movement has issued since 2008 about issues related to governance and public works is significant. A brief survey of statements is useful to understand the public image that al-Shabab wants to project. A significant number of what can generally be classified as "governance" statements deal with the distribution of aid to famine-struck regions of the country under insurgent control.

Facing significant strategic and resource losses on the battlefield, al-Shabab since the spring has continued to publicize its education and other social programs as well as repair and public works programs. The insurgent movement has conducted "education" programs for religious preachers and *da`wa* activists, Qur'an recitation and memorization contests for children, and "information sessions" for merchants, including women, about their legal responsibilities under al-Shabab's interpretation of Shari`a.[16] One of the more notable events, held under the auspices of the movement's Office of the Judiciary, was a training session, which began in March and ended in early June, for Shari`a court judges in all the regions under insurgent control.[17] Al-Shabab's publicizing of its claims to have continued investing resources and manpower in such public works projects and social programs serves to present the movement both as still capable of playing a "governance role" and unconcerned militarily with events on the battlefield.

Al-Shabab also continues to hold major social events that its media apparatus has publicized widely. These events, and their advertisement, serve to broadcast the movement's continued authority over much of the country despite recent setbacks. The first of these major events was a "conference" that lasted several hours following the killing of Usama bin Ladin.[18] In indirect admission of

al-Shabab statement, August 25, 2011.

10 "Storming of a Military Barracks of the Crusaders by the Special Forces Brigade," al-Shabab statement, May 31, 2011.

11 Representative al-Shabab statements include: "Martyrdom-seekers Storm Ugandan Military Base at Mogadishu's Port," June 9, 2011; "Killing of More than 40 Apostates in Explosions in 'Eil Waq City," June 9, 2011; "3 Bombs at a Checkpoint in Mogadishu," June 13, 2011; "Repulsing Apostate Militias backed by Ethiopia in Gedo," June 20, 2011.

12 "Somali Interior Minister 'Killed by Niece,'" al-Jazira, June 10, 2010.

13 "Shoot, O' Sons of Isma'il!," al-Shabab video, September 2, 2011.

14 "Execution of 2 Men in Reform Square North of the Capital Mogadishu," al-Shabab statement, March 8, 2011; "Carrying out the Penalty of Apostasy on 2 Spies in the Islamic District of Banaadir," al-Shabab statement, June 20, 2011; "Carrying out the Penalty on 3 Spies in the Islamic District of Banaadir," al-Shabab statement, August 25, 2011.

15 Stig Jarle Hansen, "Shabab Central: Africa's 'Taliban' Grows More Unified," *Jane's Defence Security Report*, July 19, 2010; Christopher Anzalone, "Insurgency, Governance, & Legitimacy in Somalia: A Reassessment of Harakat al-Shabab al-Mujahideen, its Rhetoric & Divisions," al-Wasat Blog, December 6, 2010.

16 Representative al-Shabab statements include: "Launching of a Program for the Repair of the Main Roads in Mogadishu," March 31, 2011; "Closing of a Session for Students in the Islamic District of Banaadir on Thursday," June 2, 2011; "Launching of the Road Renovation Project between the Cities of 'Eil Qars and Hiin Diirii," June 2, 2011; "Launching of a Shari`a Session for Merchants in Beledweyn City, the Capital of the Islamic District of Hiraan," June 9, 2011; "Martyr Foundation Hold a Celebration for the Children of the Martyrs in the Islamic District of Lower Shabelle," September 5, 2011.

17 "Closing of the Sixth Session for the Training of Judges," al-Shabab statement, June 13, 2011.

18 "Holding of a Jihadi Conference in the Islamic State of Lower Shabelle, entitled, 'We are All Usama,'" al-Shabab statement, May 16, 2011. Insurgent photographs from the conference can be seen in Christopher Anzalone, "Harakat al-Shabab in Somalia Hold Conference to Eulogize Usama bin Laden, American Member Omar Hammami Present," Views from the Occident Blog, May 11, 2011; Christopher Anzalone, "Somalia's Harakat al-Shabab Release More Photographs of Last Week's Con-

insurgent setbacks in Mogadishu, the conference was held in Afgoye, just to the south of the capital city. In attendance were some of the movement's most senior leaders including Mukhtar "Abu Mansur" Robow, Hasan Dahir Aweys, and Fu'ad Muhammad Khalaf "Shongole."

Second, in late August al-Shabab organized the communal Eid al-Fitr prayers that mark the end of the Islamic lunar month of Ramadan. Photographs from communal prayer events in three key areas, the outer districts of Mogadishu, Lower Shabelle directly to the south of the capital, and the vital port city of Kismayo were issued by the movement along with a statement.[19] All three events were held in areas where the movement has faced increased military and social pressures since mid-February. Historically, the ruling authority in a region has held the communal 'Eid prayers at the end of Ramadan and the Hajj pilgrimage season under its auspices, which serves as a claim of legitimacy.

Al-Shabab and the Clans
Following the start of the AMISOM/TFG and ASWJ offensives in mid-February, al-Shabab leaders have sought to garner support from some of Somalia's clans through a series of meetings between senior insurgent leaders and clan elders. Since its founding in 2006, al-Shabab has included leaders and members from a relatively diverse array of Somalia's clans, allowing the movement to project an image of transcending "clanism." Its current leadership includes members of several Hawiye sub-clans including the Habir Gedir/'Ayr and Murasade, the Isaaq and Rahanweyn clans, and smaller clans in the southern part of the country. Though critical of blind, politicized clanism that has played such a major role in Somalia's civil war, insurgent leaders have not sought an open confrontation with the country's important clan structures. Instead, they have tried to navigate the complex and

often dangerous waters of clan politics through engagement and outreach.

The movement's leaders have increased their outreach to the clans since the beginning of the AMISOM, TFG, and ASWJ offensives. Mounting battlefield setbacks, which reportedly included high losses in casualties and captured equipment, have emphasized the need for the insurgents to seek support from clan elders and other key clan members, who wield significant societal influence. Al-Shabab's press office and affiliated media networks have publicized its outreach to the clans in a series of statements and releases of photographs. Insurgent leaders have met with clan leaders from the Digil and Mirifle sub-clans, which make up the larger Rahanweyn clan group in Bay and Bakool, as well as Hawiye clan leaders in and around Mogadishu.[20] Senior al-Shabab leaders including Aweys and the movement's district governors have participated in these clan outreach events, which have served as prominent calls for support against the movement's enemies.[21]

Response to the Famine
The ongoing famine, which threatens the lives of millions of Somalis, presents al-Shabab with perhaps the greatest strategic challenge it has ever faced since establishing its control over most of southern and central Somalia. There are reportedly growing rifts among insurgent leaders over how to respond to the famine.[22] Al-Shabab also faces a mounting public relations disaster with regard to its reported banning of

international humanitarian agencies from regions under its control, although the insurgent movement has not banned, as is often reported, all such agencies from operating and it has welcomed many Muslim charities, some of them from Somali diaspora communities, to work in its territory.

Al-Shabab officials have sought to deliver food, water, medicine, and other aid to Somalis suffering from the famine since at least last autumn. These projects are well publicized in insurgent media in the hopes of countering some of the mounting bad publicity by the movement's intransigence in other areas. A significant amount of the aid seems to have come from the *zakat* donations required of financially capable Muslims for the poor as well as through insurgent taxation of merchants and traders in Mogadishu's Bakara Market and the port cities of Kismayo and Marka. Insurgents have also reportedly forcibly taken livestock and other forms of taxes from local populations.[23] By carrying out its own relief projects, al-Shabab is seeking to show that it is capable of helping the populace without the involvement of the international community.

Many of the movement's most publicized efforts have been carried out by its "emergency relief committee," currently headed by Hussein 'Ali Fidow.[24] A video produced by al-Shabab's al-Kata'ib Media Foundation and released on April 1 showed footage of rotting food from the World Food Program (WFP), which al-Shabab banned from operating in regions under its control in February 2010, and showed its relief committee's work distributing aid to the needy.[25] The video also included a lengthy interview with the movement's Office of Zakat and former head of the relief committee, Sultan bin Muhammad Al Muhammad, as well as purported testimonials from thankful civilians.

ference Eulogizing Usama bin Laden," Views from the Occident Blog, May 17, 2011.

19 "Muslims Hold 'Eid Prayers in the Islamic Districts," al-Shabab statement, August 31, 2011. Insurgent photographs from the three communal prayer events can be viewed at Christopher Anzalone, "Somalia's Harakat al-Shabab Mark 'Eid al-Fitr with Congregational Prayers in Mogadishu, Lower Shabelle, & Kismaayo," Views from the Occident Blog, September 2, 2011.

20 "Al Shabab Train Local Elders," Hiraan Online, June 28, 2011; "Meeting in the Islamic District of Banaadir with Leaders of the Mudulood Clan," al-Shabab, March 18, 2011.

21 "Clan Leaders Arrive in Mogadishu and Declare they are Supporting the Fighting against the Crusaders," al-Shabab statement, March 6, 2011; "Meeting between [Leaders of the] Islamic District of Banaadir with Some Neighborhoods of the Capital," al-Shabab statement, June 20, 2011; "Meeting between Officials of the District of Banaadir and the Yakhshid and Kaaraan Neighborhoods in the North of the Capital," al-Shabab statement, June 14, 2011; "Clans in the Islamic District of Juba Donate Weapons for the Jihad in God's Path," al-Shabab statement, June 13, 2011.

22 Mike Pflanz, "Somalia Famine Could Cause Militant Al Shabab Group to Splinter," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 9, 2011; Farouk Chothia, "Could Somali Famine Deal a Fatal Blow to al-Shabab?" BBC, August 9, 2011.

23 Representative al-Shabab statements include: "Start of the Distribution of Zakat in all the Islamic Districts," November 20, 2010; "The Zakat Office of the Islamic District of Middle Shabelle Distributes Aid to the Needy," January 25, 2010.

24 "Drought Relief Team Extend Food Assistance to the Affected Regions," al-Shabab statement, August 19, 2011.

25 "Harvest of the Shari`a," al-Shabab video, April 1, 2011.

In early September, al-Shabab's frontline military force, Jaysh al-'Usrah, also participated in the distribution of aid in a refugee camp, al-Yasir, in the Lower Shabelle region.[26] This clever strategic move may have been meant to show that al-Shabab's fighters, though heavily engaged in Mogadishu and other areas of the country, were still capable of carrying out other duties. The al-Yasir Camp has become al-Shabab's flagship refugee center, the location of many insurgent press conferences and carefully choreographed media events. Senior insurgent leaders, including Aweys and Muhammad Abu 'Abdullah, the movement's governor of Lower Shabelle, have visited and been photographed by the insurgents' media office as well as affiliated and sympathetic Somali media networks. Visiting delegations from Turkey and Egypt have also visited the camp, leading the TFG to ban international humanitarian workers or journalists from traveling to insurgent-held areas.[27] On October 13, al-Yasir was the site of a significant media event, the delivery of humanitarian aid, Qur'ans, prayer books, and a cash donation by a young English-speaking man, Abu 'Abdullah al-Muhajir, who claimed to represent al-Qa`ida. He was accompanied by al-Shabab spokesman 'Ali Rage, and banners at the event stated that the insurgent movement "coordinated" the aid delivery.[28] The fact that the identities between "al-Qa`ida" and al-Shabab were separated on the official banners at the event is potentially significant considering speculation about whether the Somali insurgents will formally merge with al-Qa`ida.

Conclusion

The sheer scale of the famine far surpasses al-Shabab's ability to adequately respond, and the movement has come under increasing pressure to relent on its ban of many of the largest international humanitarian aid agencies, such as the WFP. In early July, al-Shabab spokesman 'Ali Rage announced that the movement would allow some international aid agencies, Muslim and non-Muslim, to work in insurgent-held areas. At a press conference in Mogadishu on July 21, however, Rage accused the United Nations of politicizing the famine and said that the WFP and other previously banned aid agencies remained banned.[29] This type of intransigence, together with increasing backlashes from growing segments of the population angered by al-Shabab's interpretation of Shari`a, risks further alienating the movement from the public upon whose support, acquiescence, or indifference it largely depends on for its continued survival as a viable social entity.

The difficulties posed by the famine are compounded with battlefield setbacks in Mogadishu, Banadir, and areas along Somalia's western border regions. In addition to the military threat of AMISOM, the TFG, and ASWJ, the chances that other powerful social groups, such as militias formerly affiliated with al-Shabab, will revolt and break away also potentially endanger the insurgents' continued territorial control. Claims of al-Shabab's imminent collapse, however, are exaggerated and belied by the movement's continued ability to launch major attacks inside Mogadishu as well as inflict significant numbers of casualties on AMISOM and TFG forces.[30]

Christopher Anzalone is a doctoral student in the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University where he studies modern Muslim socio-political movements including transnational jihadi groups, Shi'ite Islam, and Islamist visual culture. Much of his current work and recent publications are focused on Harakat al-Shabab al-Mujahidin in Somalia.

26 "Jaysh al-'Usrah Distribution of Aid to 10,000 Children in Al-Yasir Camp," al-Shabab statement, September 5, 2011.

27 "Turkish Delegate Reach at Al Shabaab Controlled Area," Shabelle Media Network, September 13, 2011; Abdi Sheikh and Mohamed Ahmed, "Somalia Bans Foreign Aid Workers from Rebel Areas," Reuters, September 17, 2011.

28 Jeffrey Gettleman, "Al Qaeda Tries a New Tactic in Somalia: Philanthropy," *New York Times*, October 16, 2011; Christopher Anzalone, "Al-Shabab: Between the Battlefield & the Famine," Open Security, October 21, 2011.

29 Ibrahim Mohamed, "Somali Rebels say Famine Label used for Politics," Reuters, July 21, 2011; "Somali Islamists Maintain Aid Ban and Deny Famine," BBC, July 22, 2011.

30 Abdi Sheikh and Mohamed Ahmed, "Rebels Kill Scores in Somali Capital Blast," Reuters, October 4, 2011; Josh Kron and Mohamed Ibrahim, "African Union Peacekeepers Killed in Somalia Battle," *New York Times*, October 21, 2011.

Recent Highlights in Terrorist Activity

September 1, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A suicide bomber in a vehicle killed two people in Lakki Marwat District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. – *RFE/RL, September 1*

September 3, 2011 (YEMEN): A suicide bomber in a vehicle killed three Yemeni soldiers in an attack on an army post in Aden. – *AFP, September 3*

September 5, 2011 (PAKISTAN): Pakistani authorities announced the arrest of Younis al-Mauritani, identified as a senior member of al-Qa`ida, in Quetta, Baluchistan Province. The exact date of his capture was not clear. U.S. officials said that they would likely seek to question al-Mauritani. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, "Mauritani headed Al Qaeda's international operations and had been planning attacks on a variety of U.S. economic interests, including gas and oil pipelines and hydroelectric dams, Pakistani officials said. He also had been planning to target American ships and oil tankers with speedboats filled with explosives. Mauritani had been asked by Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden to focus on targets of economic importance to the United States, Europe and Australia, Pakistani military officials said." Two other al-Qa`ida operatives were arrested with him. – *Reuters, September 6; Dawn, September 7; Los Angeles Times, September 8*

September 7, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A suicide bomber in an explosives-laden vehicle attacked the residence of the deputy chief of the Frontier Corps in Quetta, Farrukh Shahzad. A second assailant detonated explosives attached to his body inside the deputy chief's home as part of the coordinated attack. The bombs wounded Shahzad, killed his wife and injured one of his children. More than 20 people were also killed in the blasts. The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility and said that the attack was to avenge the recent capture of al-Qa`ida operative Younis al-Mauritani, who was apprehended in Quetta. – *Dawn, September 7; UPI, September 7*

September 8, 2011 (NORTH AFRICA): EU counterterrorism coordinator Gilles de Kerchove warned that al-Qa`ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) is spreading its footprint around Africa and that countries such as "Mali, Niger and Mauritania need help" in combating the threat. Kerchove said that Algeria, on the other hand, is prepared to fight AQIM because "it has a powerful army." – *AP, September 8*

September 9, 2011 (UNITED STATES): U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton warned that al-Qa`ida was behind a specific, credible but unconfirmed report of a threat to harm Americans as the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks approaches. The cities at risk are primarily New York and Washington. – *Reuters, September 9*

September 10, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A large truck bomb exploded outside a U.S. military base in Sayedabad district of Wardak Province, injuring 77 U.S. soldiers. – *Los Angeles Times, September 12*

September 10, 2011 (SWEDEN): Authorities arrested four men on suspicion of plotting a terrorist attack in Sweden. Three of the men are of Somali descent, while the fourth is Iraqi. They were identified as Kulan Mohamud Abel, Mahamud Abdi Aziz, Mahmood Salar Sami and Mohamud Abdi Weli. – *CNN, September 12*

September 12, 2011 (GLOBAL): Al-Qa`ida chief Ayman al-Zawahiri released a new message to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. In the speech, al-Zawahiri praised the Arab Spring as a "devastating blow" to the United States, saying that the uprisings "liberated the Arab people from handcuffs of fear and terror." – *CNN, September 13*

September 13, 2011 (UNITED STATES): The director of the Central Intelligence Agency, David Petraeus, said that al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) represents the most serious terrorism threat to the United States. The director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Robert Mueller, separately warned that "homegrown" violent extremists also pose a serious threat to the U.S. homeland. – *Voice of America, September 13*

September 13, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): Militants launched a coordinated attack in Kabul, and it took 20 hours for security forces to end the siege. The insurgents targeted the U.S. Embassy, other foreign embassies, NATO offices, and Afghan government offices. At least seven Afghans were killed. U.S. officials suspect that the Haqqani network was behind the operation. – *Wall Street Journal, September 14; Sydney Morning Herald, September 16*

September 13, 2011 (PAKISTAN): Militants fired a rocket-propelled grenade and AK-47 assault rifles at a school bus in Peshawar, killing four children and the driver. The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility, saying that the children on the bus were from a pro-government tribe. – *Reuters, September 13*

September 15, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A U.S. official informed reporters of the recent death of Abu Hafs al-Shahri, identified as al-Qa`ida's chief of operations for Pakistan. According to CNN, "His cause of death was not disclosed, but the United States frequently uses armed aerial drones to target al Qaeda operatives inside Pakistan. Al-Shahri was seen as a possible successor to al Qaeda's second-in-command, Atiyah Abdul Rahman, who was killed in late August, the U.S. official said. Little else was immediately known about him." – *CNN, September 15*

September 15, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A suicide bomber attacked the funeral service of a tribal leader opposed to the Taliban, killing approximately 46 people. The incident occurred in Lower Dir District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility, and said that they will target the funerals and weddings of anyone engaged in pro-government activity against them. – *Guardian, September 15; CNN, September 16; AFP, September 17*

September 15, 2011 (NIGER): Nigerien soldiers and suspected members of al-Qa`ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) clashed in the Air Mountain region in northern Niger, leaving a Nigerien soldier and three AQIM members dead. – *Reuters, September 16*

September 16, 2011 (UNITED STATES): John Brennan, President Barack Obama's top counterterrorism adviser, said that "the United States does not view our authority to use military force against al-Qaeda as being restricted solely to 'hot' battlefields like Afghanistan." He further explained that since the United States is "in an armed conflict with al-Qaeda, the United States takes the legal position that, in accordance with international law, we have the authority to take action against al-Qaeda and its associated forces without doing a separate self-defense analysis each time…We reserve the right to take unilateral action if or when other governments are unwilling or unable to take the necessary actions themselves." – *Bloomberg, September 16*

September 16, 2011 (NORTH AFRICA): The U.S. Embassy in Algiers warned that al-Qa`ida may attempt to launch missiles at planes chartered by foreign oil firms in North Africa. There are concerns that shoulder-fired missiles in neighboring Libya have been smuggled out of the country and into the hands of militants belonging to al-Qa`ida in the Islamic Maghreb. – *AFP, September 16*

September 18, 2011 (UNITED KINGDOM): British authorities arrested a number of men on terrorism charges. Three of the men were charged with plotting suicide bombings in the United Kingdom. – *Guardian, September 25*

September 18, 2011 (PAKISTAN): Taliban militants attacked a police post in the Bara area of Khyber Agency in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas. A policeman and four anti-Taliban fighters were killed, as well as possibly 10 Taliban militants. – *al-Jazira, September 18*

September 18, 2011 (NIGERIA): A video obtained by Agence France-Presse purportedly features a suicide bomber alleged to have been responsible for the August 26, 2011 bombing against the UN headquarters in Abuja. The attack was claimed by Boko Haram, an Islamist sect based in northern Nigeria. According to the BBC, the video "shows the alleged bomber asking his family to understand his action, which he said was meant to send a message to the US president 'and other infidels.'" – *BBC, September 18*

September 19, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A suicide bomber drove an explosives-laden truck into the home of a senior police official in Karachi, killing six police officers. A woman and a child were also killed. The intended target of the attack, however, survived. The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility. – *CNN, September 19*

September 19, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A bomb ripped through a marketplace in Peshawar, killing at least six people. – *CNN, September 19*

September 19, 2011 (SAUDI ARABIA): The Saudi state news agency announced that the government will try 41 suspects who are accused of forming an al-Qa`ida-linked cell to attack U.S. forces based in neighboring Kuwait and Qatar. The group consists of 38 Saudis, one Qatari, one Yemeni and an Afghan. – *Reuters, September 19*

September 20, 2011 (TURKEY): A bomb ripped through the Turkish capital of Ankara, killing three people. The separatist Kurdish group the Kurdistan Freedom Hawks reportedly claimed responsibility. The group warned that the bombing was the "beginning of a series of attacks." – *al-Jazira, September 22*

September 20, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): Former Afghan president and current peace negotiator Burhanuddin Rabbani was assassinated by a suicide bomber in his Kabul home. The assailant hid the bomb in his turban. The blast also killed four other people. While the Taliban first took credit for the assassination, they later changed their initial statement and said that "media reports that claim responsibility are groundless. Right now we don't want to talk." – *Voice of America, September 21; Sydney Morning Herald, September 23*

September 20, 2011 (IRAQ): Insurgents wearing military uniforms launched a coordinated attack on a government compound in Ramadi, Anbar Province. At least three security personnel were killed. – *Washington Post, September 20*

September 20, 2011 (IRAQ): A gunman using a silencer killed three Iraqi policemen at a checkpoint in the Shi`a district of Shaab in northern Baghdad. – *Washington Post, September 20*

September 20, 2011 (SPAIN): Spanish authorities announced the arrest of a 24-year-old Cuban man on the Mediterranean island of Mallorca on suspicion of belonging to al-Qa`ida. According to authorities, the man "had undergone a process of radicalization in recent years." CNN, referring to the government's statement on the arrest, explained that "the suspect had 1,120 radical videos on the Internet, mostly produced by him, and he was the administrator of various internet channels, the Interior Ministry said. He used the internet for the radical indoctrination of other individuals, the statement said." – *CNN, September 20*

September 20, 2011 (PAKISTAN): The commander of the Pakistan Army for the Swat region, Major General Javed Iqbal, was injured when his helicopter came under fire in Upper Dir District. – *BBC, September 21*

September 20, 2011 (PAKISTAN): Taliban militants attacked a checkpoint in Orakzai Agency of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Pakistani security forces repelled the attack, killing at least 20 Taliban fighters. – *Daily Times, September 21*

September 21, 2011 (YEMEN): Suspected U.S. drone aircraft killed 10 alleged al-Qa`ida militants in southern Yemen's Abyan Province. – *AFP, September 21*

September 23, 2011 (YEMEN): Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Salih returned to Yemen after nearly four months of medical treatment in neighboring Saudi Arabia for severe burns he suffered in a June attack on his compound in Sana`a. – *AP, September 25*

September 25, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A suicide bomber targeted a police facility in Paktika Province, killing two policemen. – *Voice of America, September 25*

September 25, 2011 (INDONESIA): A suicide bomber detonated explosives at a church in central Java, killing approximately three people. According to Voice of America, "Witnesses said the suicide bomber mingled among the crowd at Bethel Injil Sepenuh Christian Church in Kepunton, Solo, before detonating the bomb that killed himself and wounded at least 20 others." – *AFP, September 25; Voice of America, September 26*

September 25, 2011 (PHILIPPINES): Philippine security forces killed an Abu Sayyaf Group sub-leader, identified as Imram Asgari, in Zamboanga city. – *UPI, September 27*

September 27, 2011 (SPAIN): Spanish police arrested five Algerians suspected of financing al-Qa`ida in the Islamic Maghreb. – *AP, September 27*

September 27, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A suicide bomber in a vehicle attacked a police office in Lashkar Gah, Helmand Province, killing two people. – *Reuters, September 27*

September 27, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): A roadside bomb killed 16 civilians, most of them children, in Herat Province. – *Reuters, September 27*

September 27, 2011 (YEMEN): Yemen's Defense Ministry announced that Defense Minister Mohammad Nasser Ahmad survived a suicide bomb attack on his convoy in Aden. According to reports, a suicide bomber in a vehicle drove directly into the minister's convoy as it drove out of a tunnel. – *Gulf News, September 28*

September 28, 2011 (AFGHANISTAN): Insurgents attacked a police checkpoint in Lashkar Gah, Helmand Province, killing eight Afghan policemen. – *Voice of America, September 28*

September 29, 2011 (IRAQ): U.S. Major General David Perkins, commander of the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division and of all U.S. forces in northern Iraq, told reporters that al-Qa`ida in Iraq (AQI) has suffered a "dramatic decrease" in local and foreign fundraising. "We are seeing, instead of foreign aid coming in, in large amounts, they're resorting to what I would call extortion, black marketing, robbery of jewelry stores, things like that," Perkins told journalists. "And it's devolving more into almost gang mafia-type activities... And so they are starting to, in some instances, turn against each other, which from our point of view is a good sign." – *AP, September 29*

September 29, 2011 (PAKISTAN): According to various press reports, Pakistani authorities released from prison Amin al-Haq, considered a top-level al-Qa`ida figure who spent years

serving as a bodyguard to Usama bin Ladin. He had been in Pakistani custody since approximately 2007. Anonymous officials in Pakistan were quoted in media reports as saying that al-Haq was not a "key player" in al-Qa`ida and "had no information of great value." – *CBS, September 29*

September 30, 2011 (TURKEY): A bomb exploded outside a gendarme station in Turkey's popular Mediterranean resort region of Antalya. According to CNN, "A local government official told CNN one man who appeared to be a suicide bomber was killed in the blast." – *CNN, September 30*

September 30, 2011 (IRAQ): A car bomb tore through a funeral procession near a mosque in Babil Province, killing at least 10 people. – *AFP, September 30*

September 30, 2011 (PAKISTAN): A U.S. drone reportedly killed three Taliban fighters in Baghar village of South Waziristan Agency in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. – *AFP, September 30*

September 30, 2011 (YEMEN): A U.S. drone killed Yemeni-American cleric Anwar al-`Awlaqi in Yemen. The drone also killed Samir Khan, the co-editor of *Inspire* magazine. President Barack Obama said that the deaths marked "a major blow to al-Qaeda's most active operational affiliate [al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula]." – *Washington Post, September 30*